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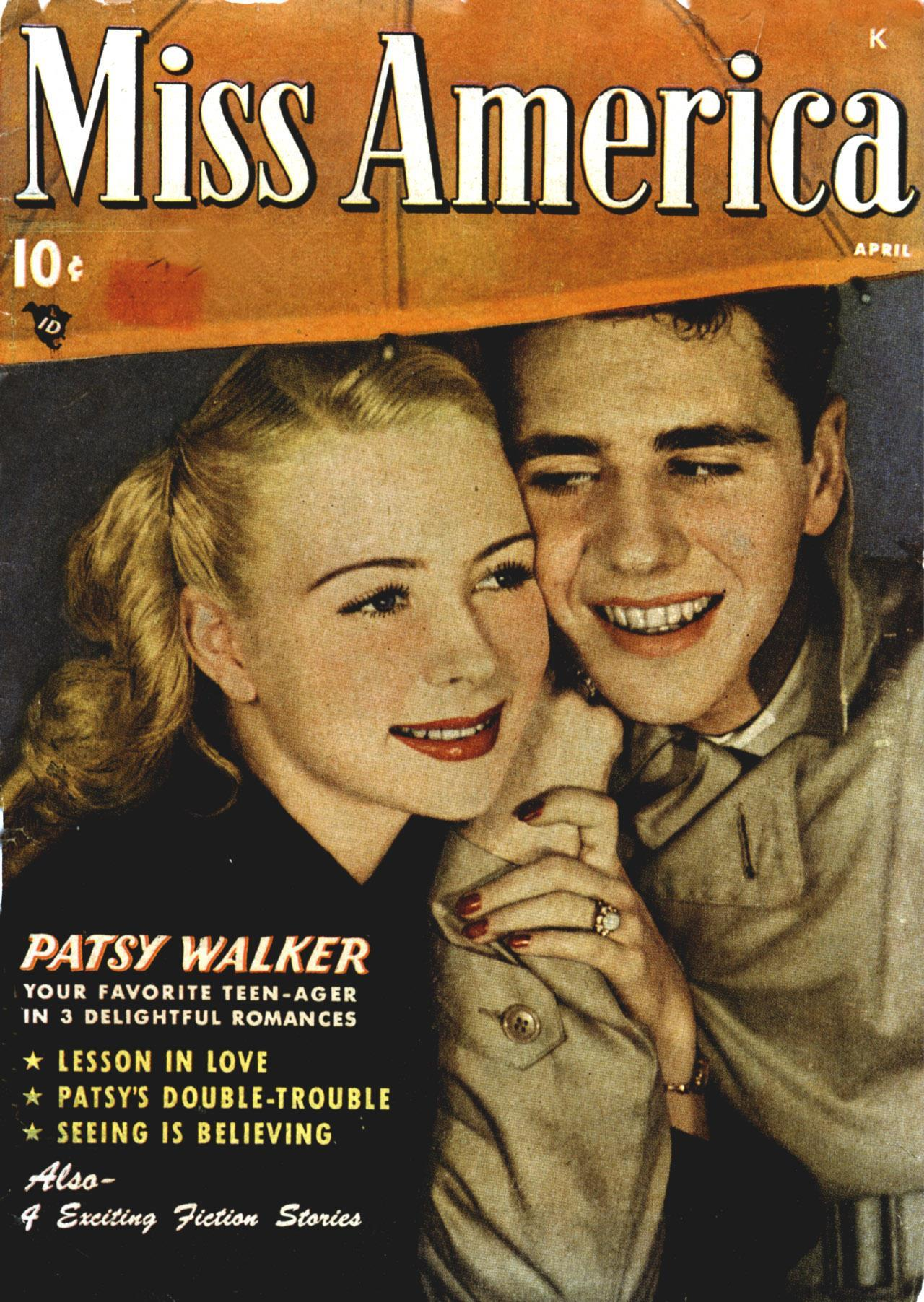

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Part of Contents

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1. How to take care of your skin.
2. Professional Make-up Tricks.
3. Secrets of Smart Hair-Styling.
4. Hands can tell a tale; manicuring.
5. Your feet should be admjred.
6. Carriage, posture, walking, acquiring grace and ease.
7. Do you sit correctly?
8. What you should weigh.
9. Table of Average Weights.
10. If you are fat, how to reduce safely, easily.
11. If you are thin, putting on weight.
12. Does one have to exercise?
13. Assuring personal cleanliness and hygiene; check list.
14. Take care of your teeth.
15. How much sleep do you need?
16. She Walks in Beauty.
17. When is a girl smartly dressed? Knows her type—never overdressed—never conscious of clothes—yet with certain verve and dash.
18. How to effect certain optical illusions to appear taller or shorter, thinner or rounder.
19. If you are very short, here is what you can do; fabrics, colors, types and clothes to wear; accessories. Actions and manners, too.
20. How to dress if you are very tall.
21. If you are stout, besides trying to lose weight, here's what else to do and not to do. Don't wear tight clothes, tiny hats, small things. Here are best colors, fabrics, styles for you!
22. The normal figure woman; how to select the most becoming clothes; What goes with what.
23. Building your wardrobe, plan—don't plunge. Building around what you need most, adding endless variety.
24. Accessories are important relating to several costumes.
25. Six rules for being well-groomed.
26. What men don't like in women's clothes or grooming.
27. How to achieve that well-dressed appearance that makes people notice you.

SECTION II—WHAT TO DO TO IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONS WITH OTHERS

28. How to meet people in cordial and poised manner—when to shake hands, what to say.
29. What a smile can do; laughter.
30. Adding interest to your voice.
31. Looking at other people with open mind.
32. Your troubles are your own; don't spread your woes.
33. The art of conversation. Don't be a tangent talker, omit the terrible details; brevity still soul of wit.
34. Nothing duller than walking encyclopedia; insert own opinions and ideas; avoid useless chatter.
35. How to be interesting talker.
36. Listen with mind as well as ears.
37. Do people like you more as time goes on?
38. How to overcome shyness and self-consciousness.
39. How to develop physical and mental appeal.
40. Having a good time at a party.
41. When dining out, two or a crowd, formal or casual.
42. How are your telephone manners?
43. Write the sort of letters you would like to receive.
44. Shopping, pleasure or ordeal?
45. Manners and clothes of yesterday compared to those of today.
46. Don't be a martyr-type; out of fashion to enjoy poor health, or sacrifice life for children, parents, etc.
47. The wishy-washy dear is burden to herself and others; let people know your likes and dislikes.
48. How to handle the question of money matters.
49. Help, help, what's the answer? Should you let prospective beau take you to 55c theatre seats or to orchestra only? Does he fail to bring flowers because he is stingy, thoughtless or impoverished? When he asks you where to go, should you name a tea room or an expensive supper club? When he asks you what you want for a gift, should you say, "nothing" or "Guerlain's Perfume"? etc., etc.
50. How to make yourself popular and sought after.
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FOOD FOR FUN

TOMATO TASTY . . .

Let's try something different! How about dressing up tomatoes as TOMATO FRITTERS?

Cream 3 tablespoons of sugar with 1 tablespoon butter, and add 1 egg, well beaten. Mix well, and then add 1 cup peeled and chopped tomatoes. Dissolve a teaspoon of soda in a cup of sour milk, and add with 2 cups flour which has been sifted with a teaspoon salt.

Cream ½ cup butter, adding gradually ½ cup of sugar. Then add the unbeaten yolks of 2 eggs and beat all thoroughly together. Add ¼ cup milk, just a pinch of salt sifted with 1½ cups flour and a teaspoon baking powder.

Beat all this until nicely blended. Then divide the mixture in half and add one square of melted chocolate to one half. Roll the white dough in a sheet on a board. Then roll out the chocolate dough and put it on top of the white dough. Now, roll up like a jelly roll and leave in the refrigerator overnight.

When you are ready to use, cut the dough crosswise in thin slices and bake in a moderate oven until done.

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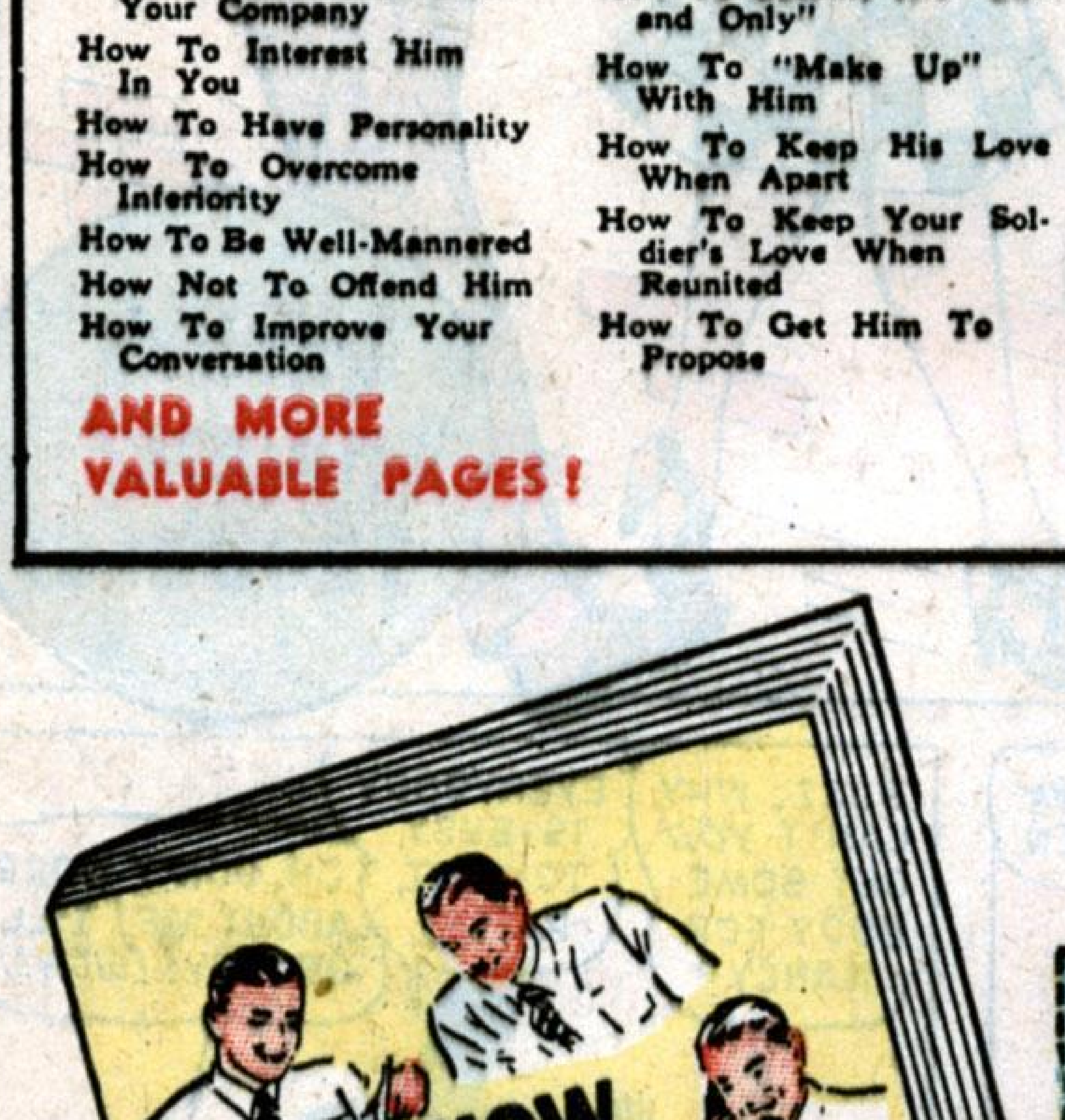
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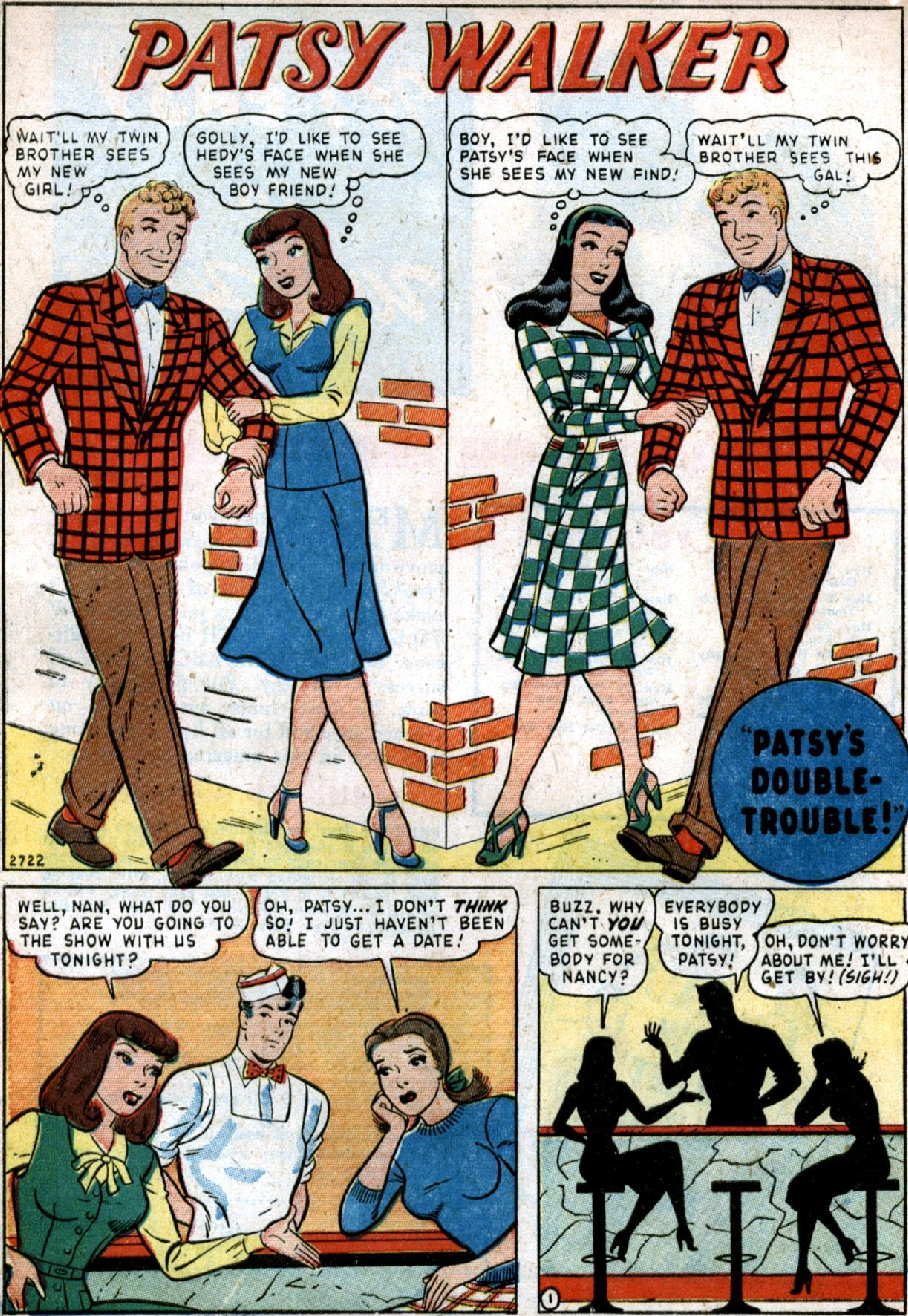
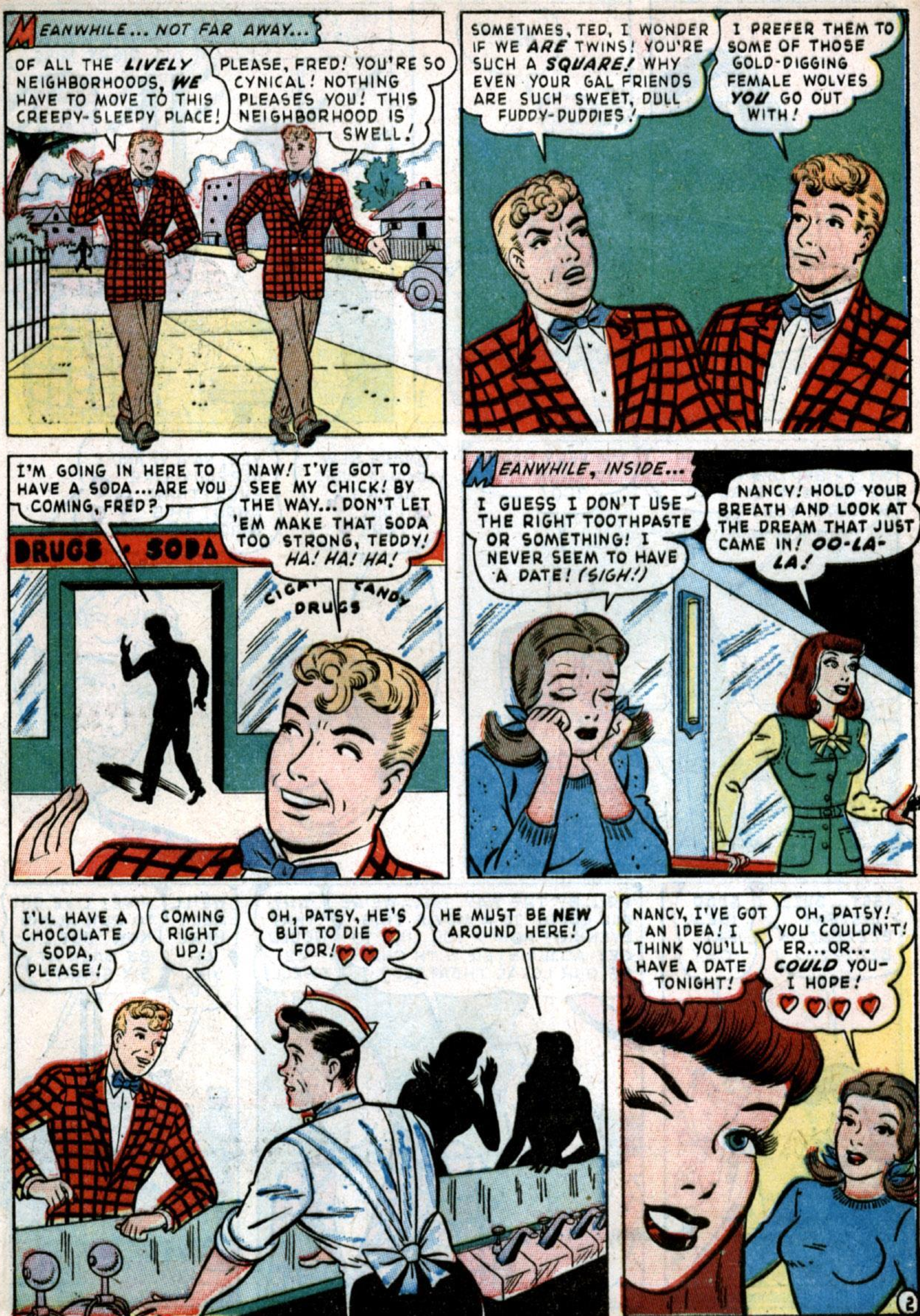
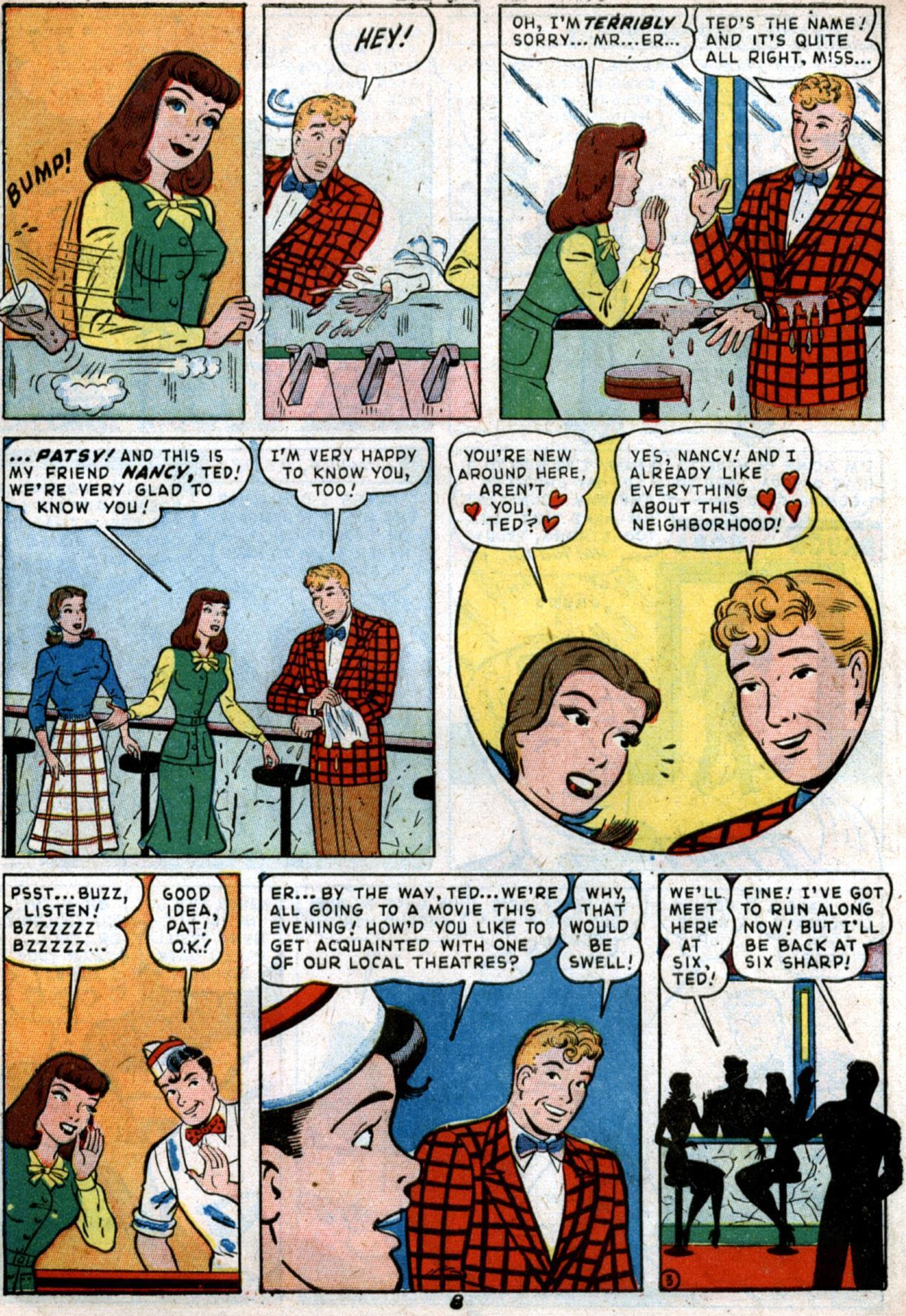
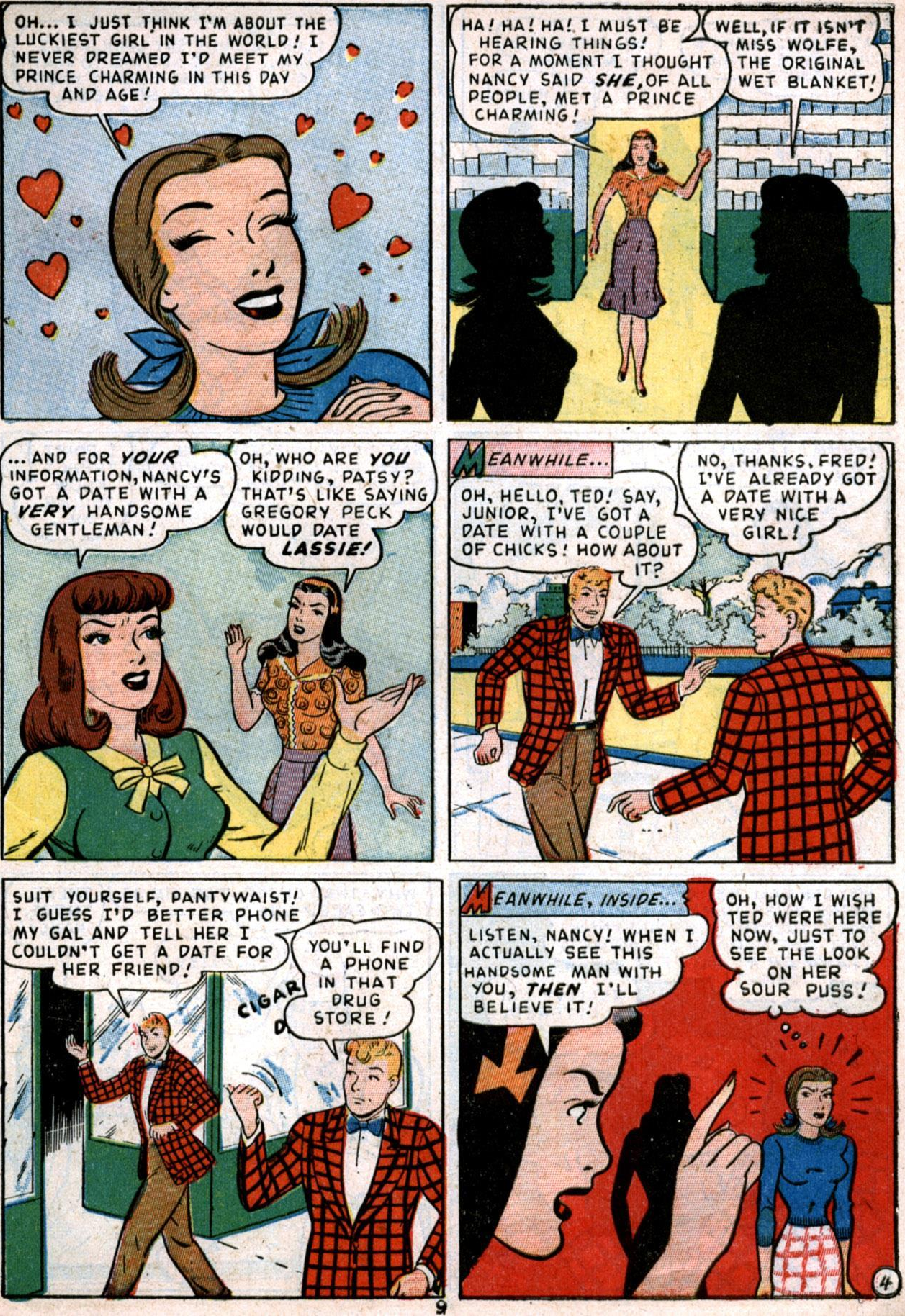
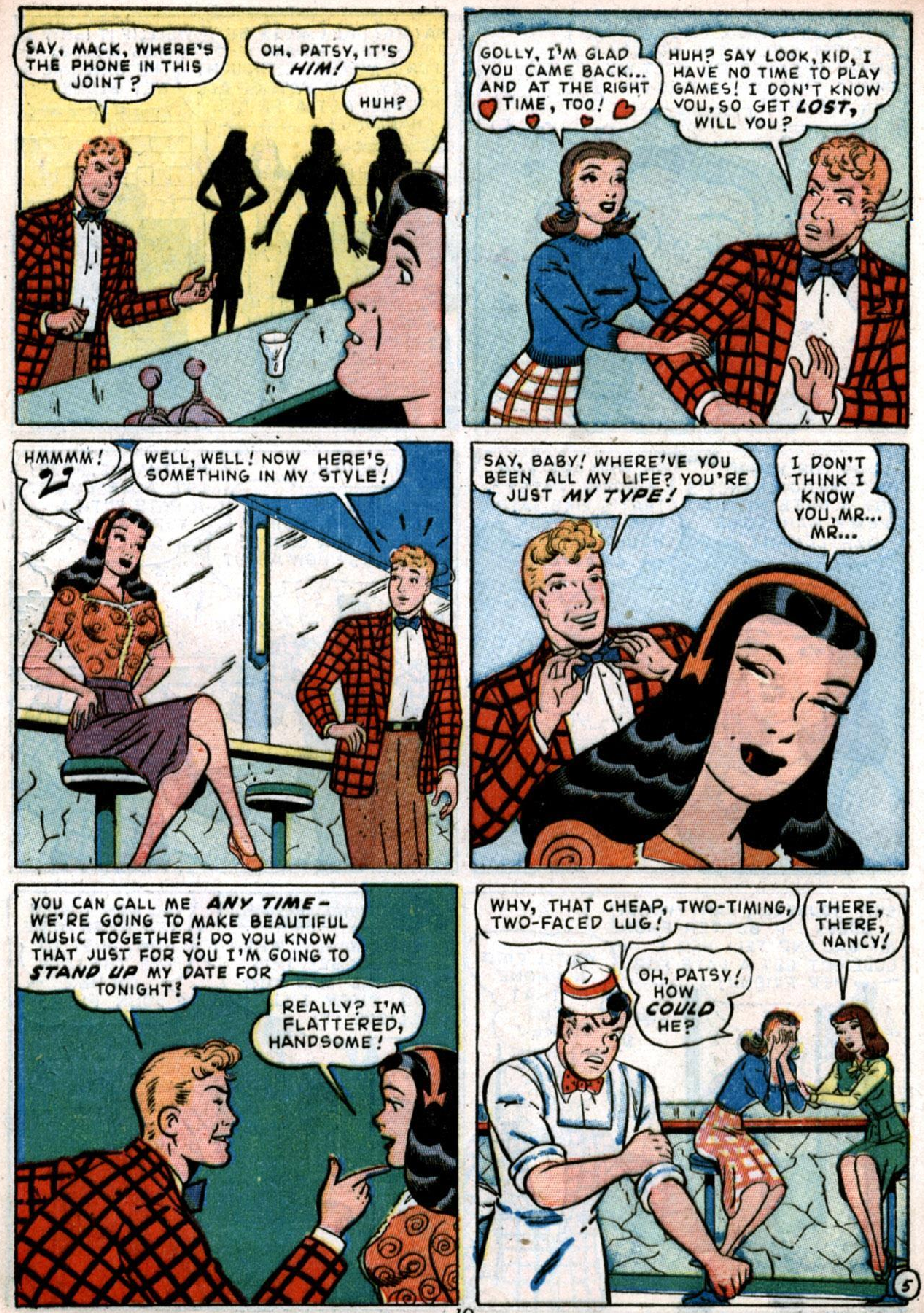
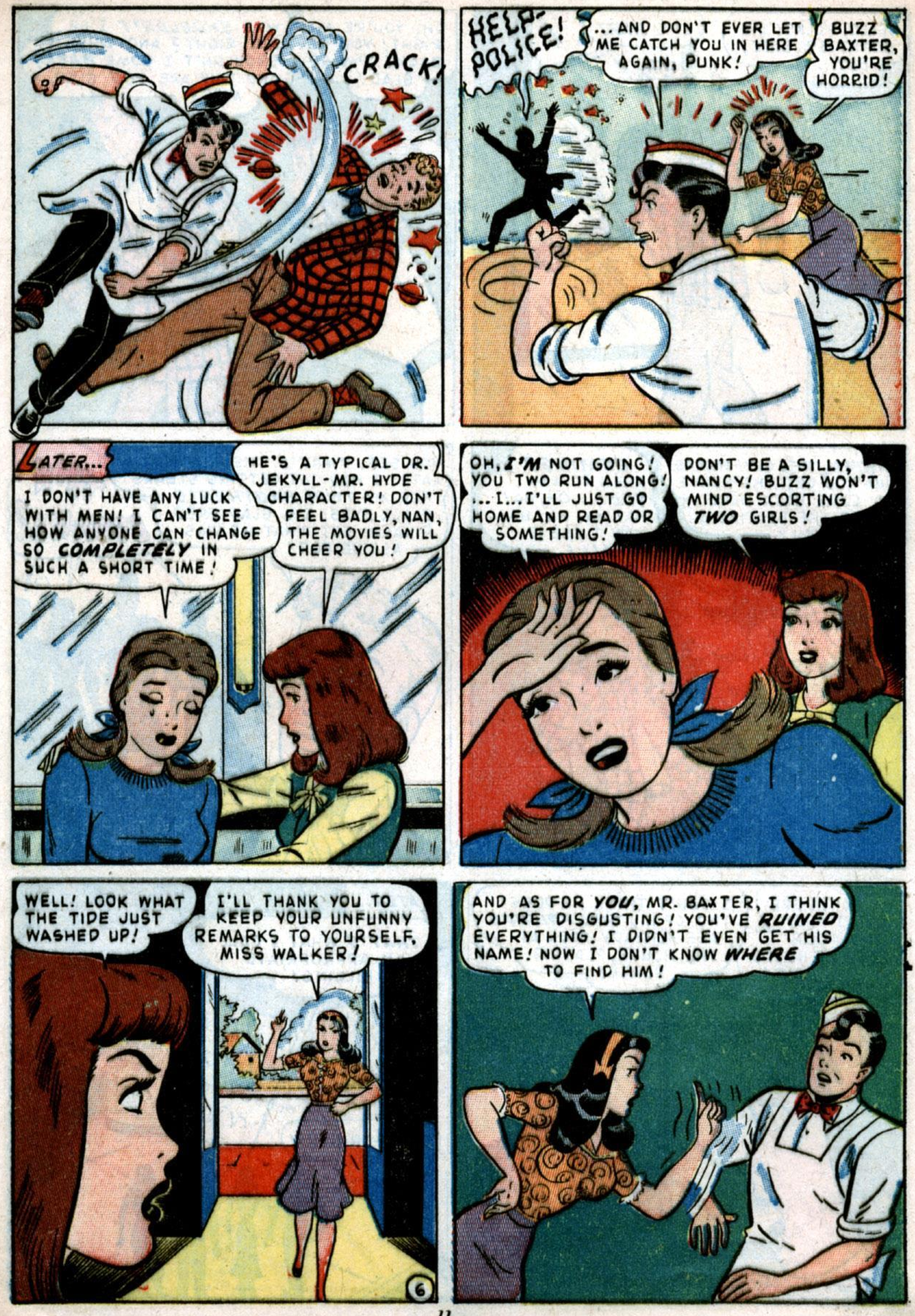

PATSY WALKER
WAIT'LL MY TWIN BROTHER SEES MY NEW GIRL!
GOLLY, I'D LIKE TO SEE HEDY'S FACE WHEN SHE SEES MY NEW BOY FRIEND!
BOY, I'D LIKE TO SEE PATSY'S FACE WHEN SHE SEES MY NEW FIND!
WAIT'LL MY TWIN BROTHER SEES THIS GAL!
"PATSY'S DOUBLE-TROUBLE!"
2722
WELL, NAN, WHAT DO YOU SAY? ARE YOU GOING TO THE SHOW WITH US TONIGHT?
OH, PATSY... I DON'T *THINK* SO! I JUST HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET A DATE!
BUZZ, WHY CAN'T *YOU* GET SOMEBODY FOR NANCY?
EVERYBODY IS BUSY TONIGHT, PATSY!
OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! I'LL GET BY! *(SIGH!)*
①

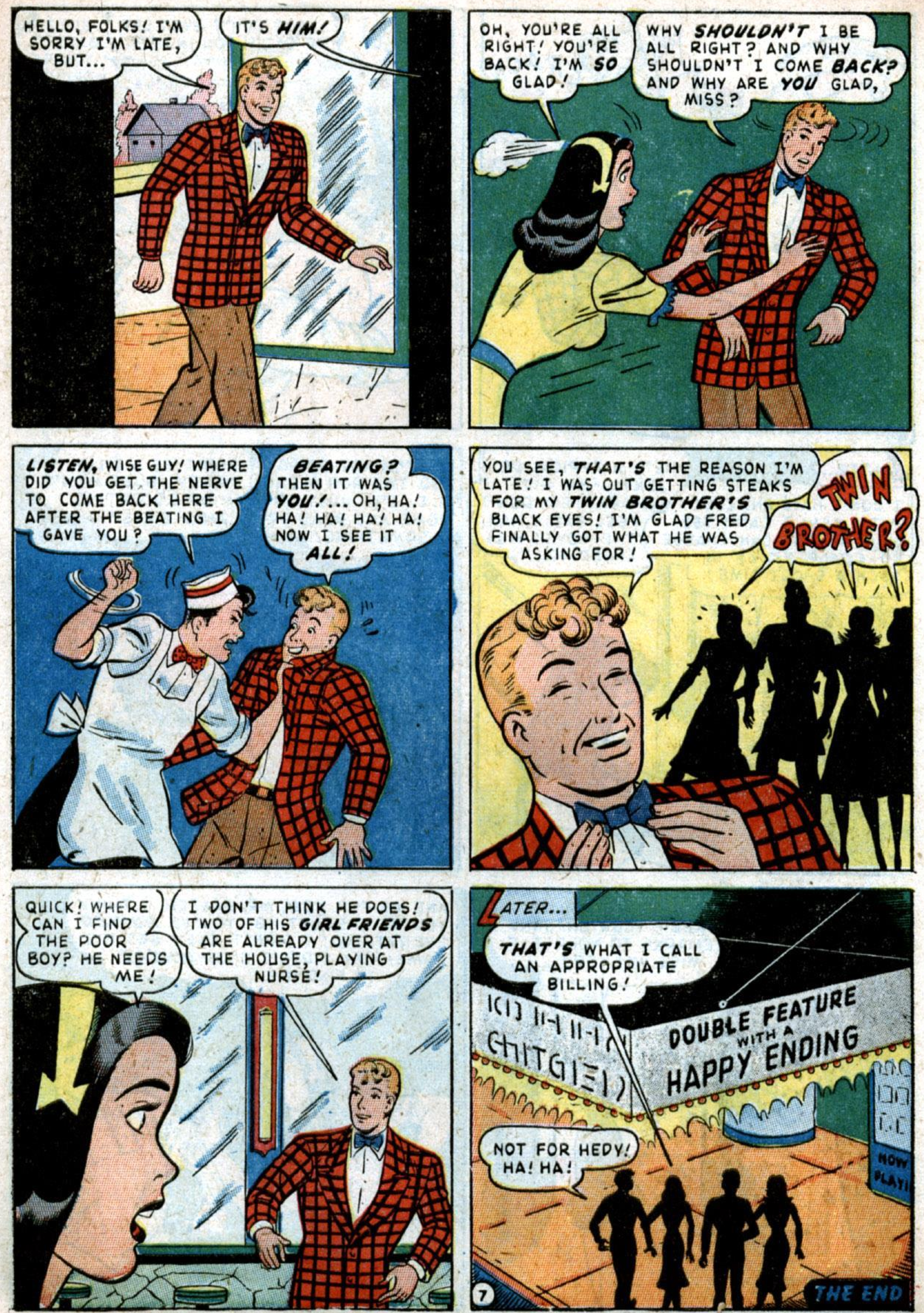

MEANWHILE... NOT FAR AWAY...
OF ALL THE *LIVELY* NEIGHBORHOODS, *WE* HAVE TO MOVE TO THIS CREEPY-SLEEPY PLACE!
PLEASE, FRED! YOU'RE SO CYNICAL! NOTHING PLEASES YOU! THIS NEIGHBORHOOD IS SWELL!
SOMETIMES, TED, I WONDER IF WE *ARE* TWINS! YOU'RE SUCH A *SQUARE!* WHY EVEN YOUR GAL FRIENDS ARE SUCH SWEET, DULL FUDDY-DUDDIES!
I PREFER THEM TO SOME OF THOSE GOLD-DIGGING FEMALE WOLVES *YOU* GO OUT WITH!
I'M GOING IN HERE TO HAVE A SODA... ARE YOU COMING, FRED?
NAW! I'VE GOT TO SEE MY CHICK! BY THE WAY... DON'T LET 'EM MAKE THAT SODA TOO STRONG, TEDDY! *HA! HA! HA!*
DRUGS · SODA
CIGA CANDY
DRUGS
MEANWHILE, INSIDE...
I GUESS I DON'T USE THE RIGHT TOOTHPASTE OR SOMETHING! I NEVER SEEM TO HAVE A DATE! (SIGH!)
NANCY! HOLD YOUR BREATH AND LOOK AT THE DREAM THAT JUST CAME IN! *OO-LA-LA!*
I'LL HAVE A CHOCOLATE SODA, PLEASE!
COMING RIGHT UP!
OH, PATSY, HE'S BUT TO DIE FOR! ♥♥♥
HE MUST BE **NEW** AROUND HERE!
NANCY, I'VE GOT AN IDEA! I THINK YOU'LL HAVE A DATE TONIGHT!
OH, PATSY! YOU COULDN'T! ER... OR... *COULD* YOU- I HOPE! ♥♥♥♥
2


BUMP!
HEY!
OH, I'M TERRIBLY SORRY... MR... ER...
TED'S THE NAME! AND IT'S QUITE ALL RIGHT, MISS...
...PATSY! AND THIS IS MY FRIEND NANCY, TED! WE'RE VERY GLAD TO KNOW YOU!
I'M VERY HAPPY TO KNOW YOU, TOO!
YOU'RE NEW AROUND HERE, AREN'T YOU, TED?
YES, NANCY! AND I ALREADY LIKE EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS NEIGHBORHOOD!
PSST... BUZZ, LISTEN! BZZZZZZ BZZZZZ...
GOOD IDEA, PAT! O.K.!
ER... BY THE WAY, TED... WE'RE ALL GOING TO A MOVIE THIS EVENING! HOW'D YOU LIKE TO GET ACQUAINTED WITH ONE OF OUR LOCAL THEATRES?
WHY, THAT WOULD BE SWELL!
WE'LL MEET HERE AT SIX, TED!
FINE! I'VE GOT TO RUN ALONG NOW! BUT I'LL BE BACK AT SIX SHARP!
3


OH... I JUST THINK I'M ABOUT THE LUCKIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD! I NEVER DREAMED I'D MEET MY PRINCE CHARMING IN THIS DAY AND AGE!
HA! HA! HA! I MUST BE HEARING THINGS! FOR A MOMENT I THOUGHT NANCY SAID *SHE*, OF ALL PEOPLE, MET A PRINCE CHARMING!
WELL, IF IT ISN'T MISS WOLFE, THE ORIGINAL WET BLANKET!
... AND FOR *YOUR* INFORMATION, NANCY'S GOT A DATE WITH A *VERY* HANDSOME GENTLEMAN!
OH, WHO ARE *YOU* KIDDING, PATSY? THAT'S LIKE SAYING GREGORY PECK WOULD DATE *LASSIE!*
MEANWHILE...
OH, HELLO, TED! SAY, JUNIOR, I'VE GOT A DATE WITH A COUPLE OF CHICKS! HOW ABOUT IT?
NO, THANKS, FRED! I'VE ALREADY GOT A DATE WITH A VERY NICE GIRL!
SUIT YOURSELF, PANTYWAIST! I GUESS I'D BETTER PHONE MY GAL AND TELL HER I COULDN'T GET A DATE FOR HER FRIEND!
YOU'LL FIND A PHONE IN THAT DRUG STORE!
CIGAR
D
MEANWHILE, INSIDE...
LISTEN, NANCY! WHEN I ACTUALLY SEE THIS HANDSOME MAN WITH YOU, *THEN* I'LL BELIEVE IT!
OH, HOW I WISH TED WERE HERE NOW, JUST TO SEE THE LOOK ON HER SOUR PUSS!
4


SAY, MACK, WHERE'S THE PHONE IN THIS JOINT?
OH, PATSY, IT'S *HIM!*
HUH?
GOLLY, I'M GLAD YOU CAME BACK... AND AT THE RIGHT TIME, TOO!
HUH? SAY LOOK, KID, I HAVE NO TIME TO PLAY GAMES! I DON'T KNOW YOU, SO GET *LOST,* WILL YOU?
HMMMM! ♫
WELL, WELL! NOW HERE'S SOMETHING IN MY STYLE!
SAY, BABY! WHERE'VE YOU BEEN ALL MY LIFE? YOU'RE JUST *MY TYPE!*
I DON'T THINK I KNOW YOU, MR... MR...
YOU CAN CALL ME *ANY TIME* — WE'RE GOING TO MAKE BEAUTIFUL MUSIC TOGETHER! DO YOU KNOW THAT JUST FOR YOU I'M GOING TO *STAND UP* MY DATE FOR TONIGHT?
REALLY? I'M FLATTERED, HANDSOME!
WHY, THAT CHEAP, TWO-TIMING, TWO-FACED LUG!
OH, PATSY! HOW *COULD* HE?
THERE, THERE, NANCY!
5


CRACK!
HELP-POLICE!
...AND DON'T EVER LET ME CATCH YOU IN HERE AGAIN, PUNK!
BUZZ BAXTER, YOU'RE HORRID!
LATER...
I DON'T HAVE ANY LUCK WITH MEN! I CAN'T SEE HOW ANYONE CAN CHANGE SO *COMPLETELY* IN SUCH A SHORT TIME!
HE'S A TYPICAL DR. JEKYLL-MR. HYDE CHARACTER! DON'T FEEL BADLY, NAN, THE MOVIES WILL CHEER YOU!
OH, *I'M* NOT GOING! YOU TWO RUN ALONG! ...I...I'LL JUST GO HOME AND READ OR SOMETHING!
DON'T BE A SILLY, NANCY! BUZZ WON'T MIND ESCORTING *TWO* GIRLS!
WELL! LOOK WHAT THE TIDE JUST WASHED UP!
I'LL THANK YOU TO KEEP YOUR UNFUNNY REMARKS TO YOURSELF, MISS WALKER!
6
AND AS FOR *YOU*, MR. BAXTER, I THINK YOU'RE DISGUSTING! YOU'VE *RUINED* EVERYTHING! I DIDN'T EVEN GET HIS NAME! NOW I DON'T KNOW *WHERE* TO FIND HIM!


HELLO, FOLKS! I'M SORRY I'M LATE, BUT...
IT'S *HIM!*
OH, YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! YOU'RE BACK! I'M *SO* GLAD!
WHY *SHOULDN'T* I BE ALL RIGHT? AND WHY SHOULDN'T I COME *BACK?* AND WHY ARE *YOU* GLAD, MISS?
LISTEN, WISE GUY! WHERE DID YOU GET THE NERVE TO COME BACK HERE AFTER THE BEATING I GAVE YOU?
BEATING? THEN IT WAS *YOU!*... OH, HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! NOW I SEE IT *ALL!*
YOU SEE, *THAT'S* THE REASON I'M LATE! I WAS OUT GETTING STEAKS FOR MY *TWIN BROTHER'S* BLACK EYES! I'M GLAD FRED FINALLY GOT WHAT HE WAS ASKING FOR!
TWIN BROTHER?
QUICK! WHERE CAN I FIND THE POOR BOY? HE NEEDS ME!
I DON'T THINK HE DOES! TWO OF HIS *GIRL FRIENDS* ARE ALREADY OVER AT THE HOUSE, PLAYING NURSE!
LATER...
THAT'S WHAT I CALL AN APPROPRIATE BILLING!
DOUBLE FEATURE WITH A HAPPY ENDING
NOT FOR HEDY! HA! HA!
NOW PLAYI
7
THE END

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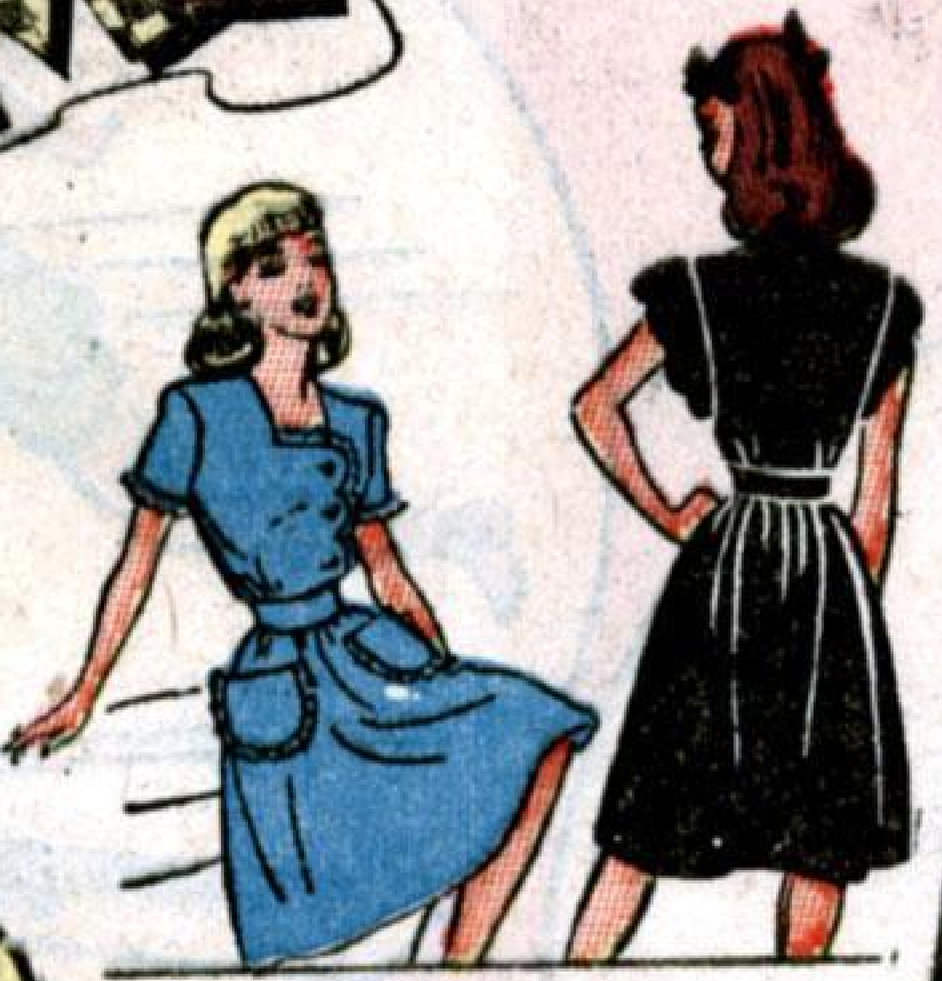

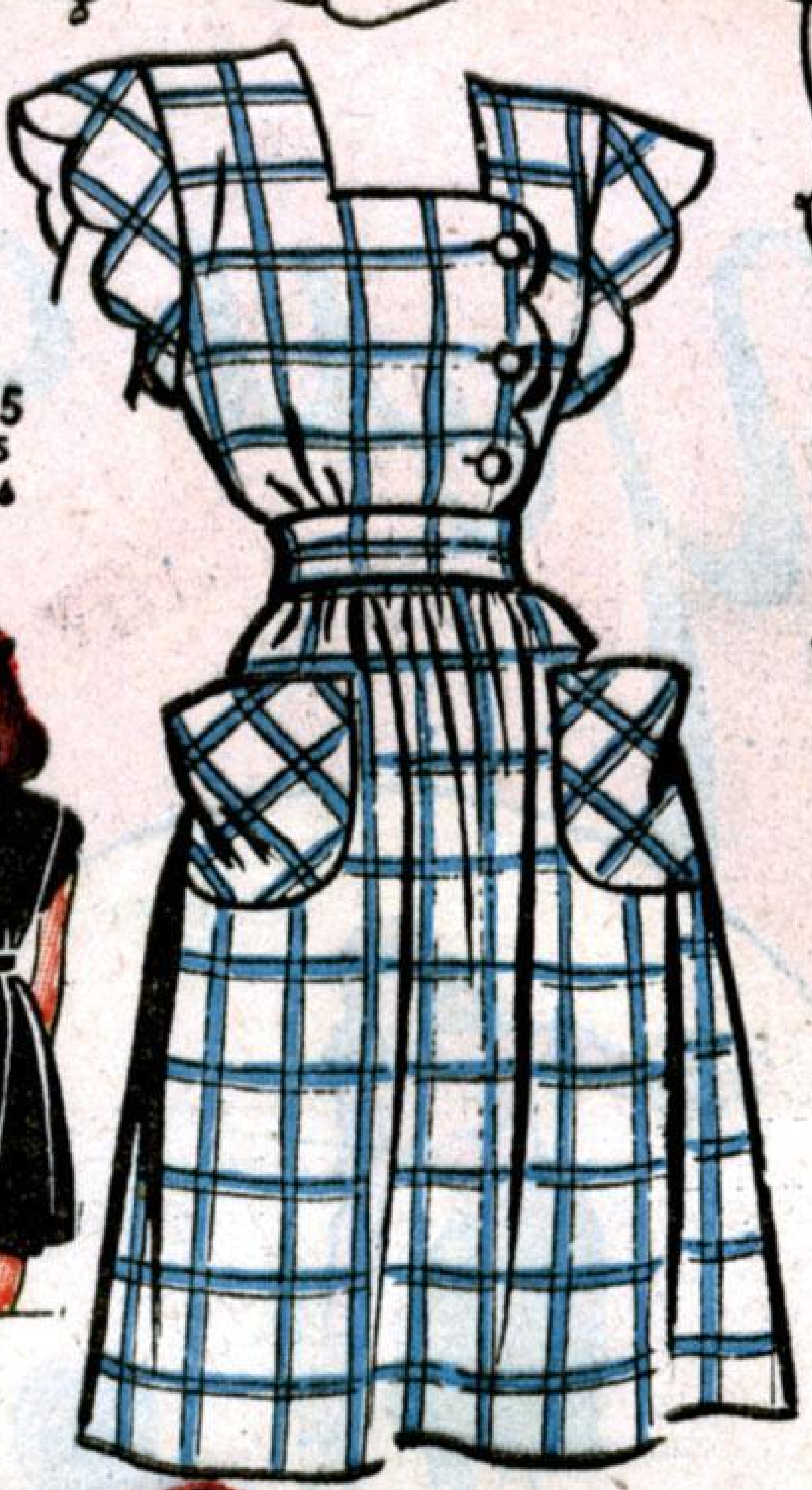

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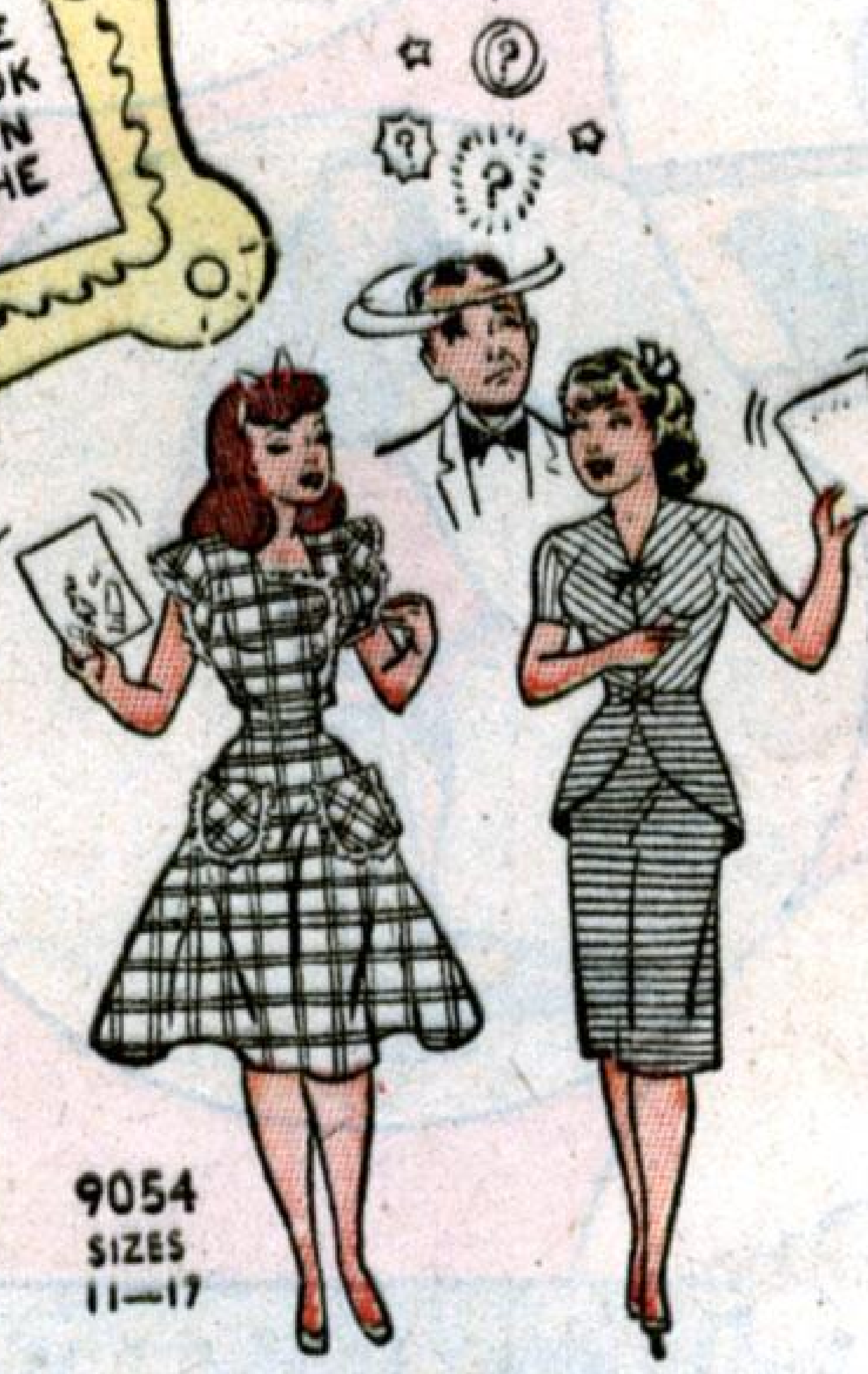

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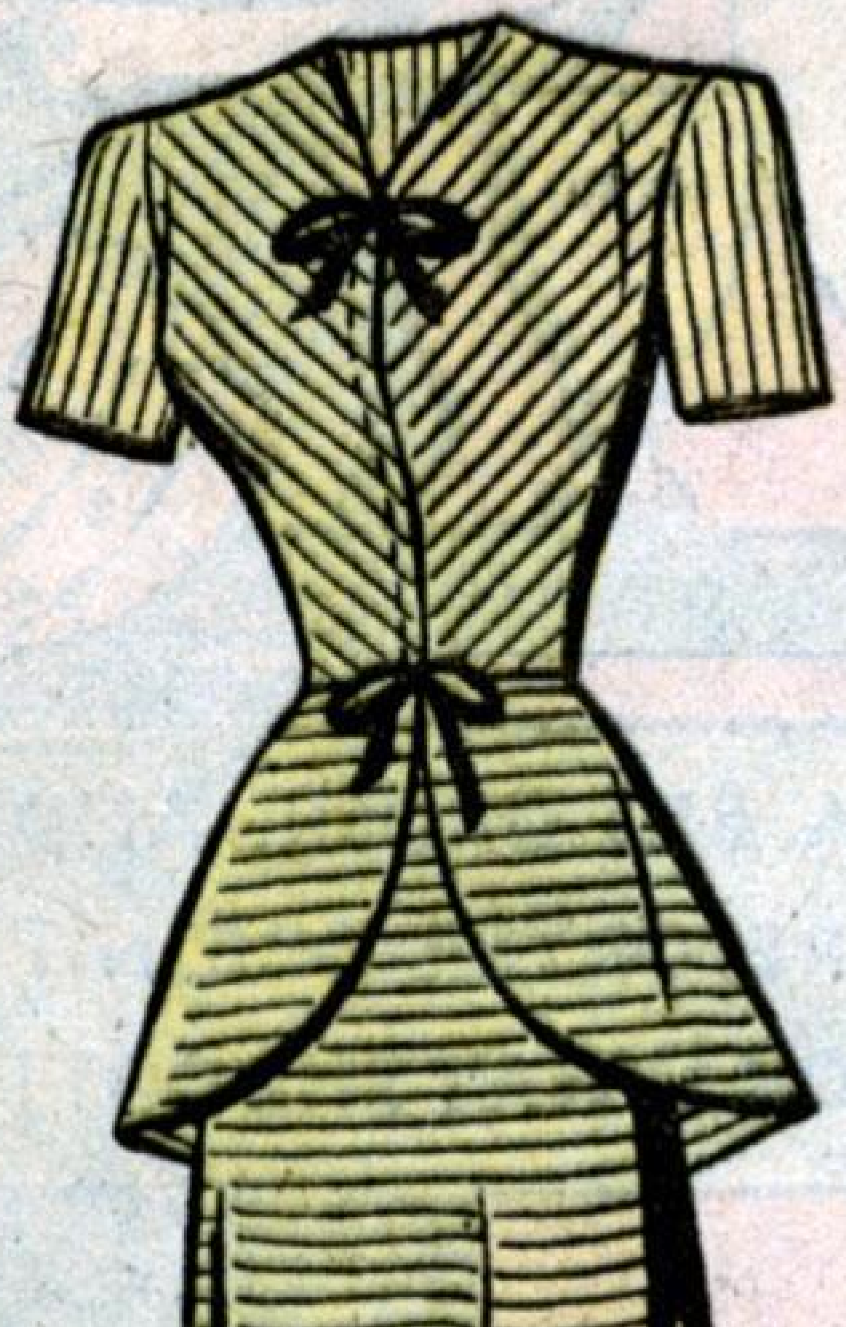
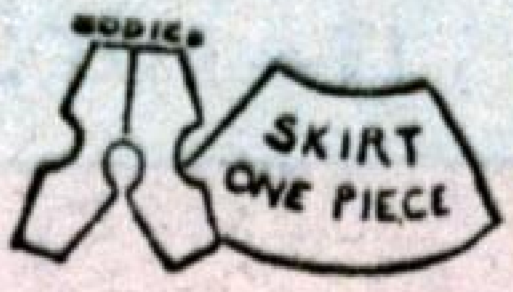
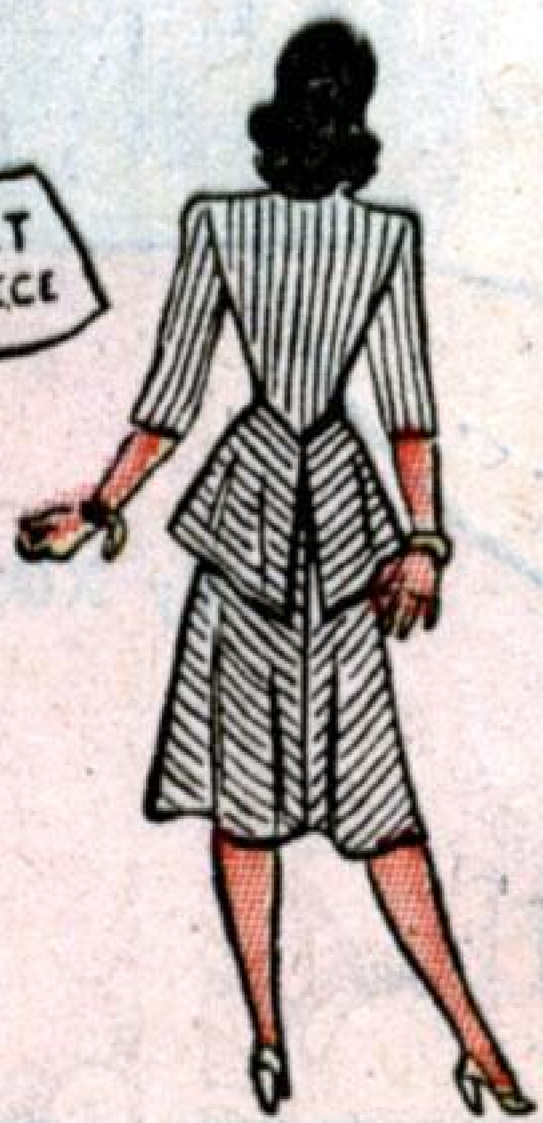
SIZES
11—17







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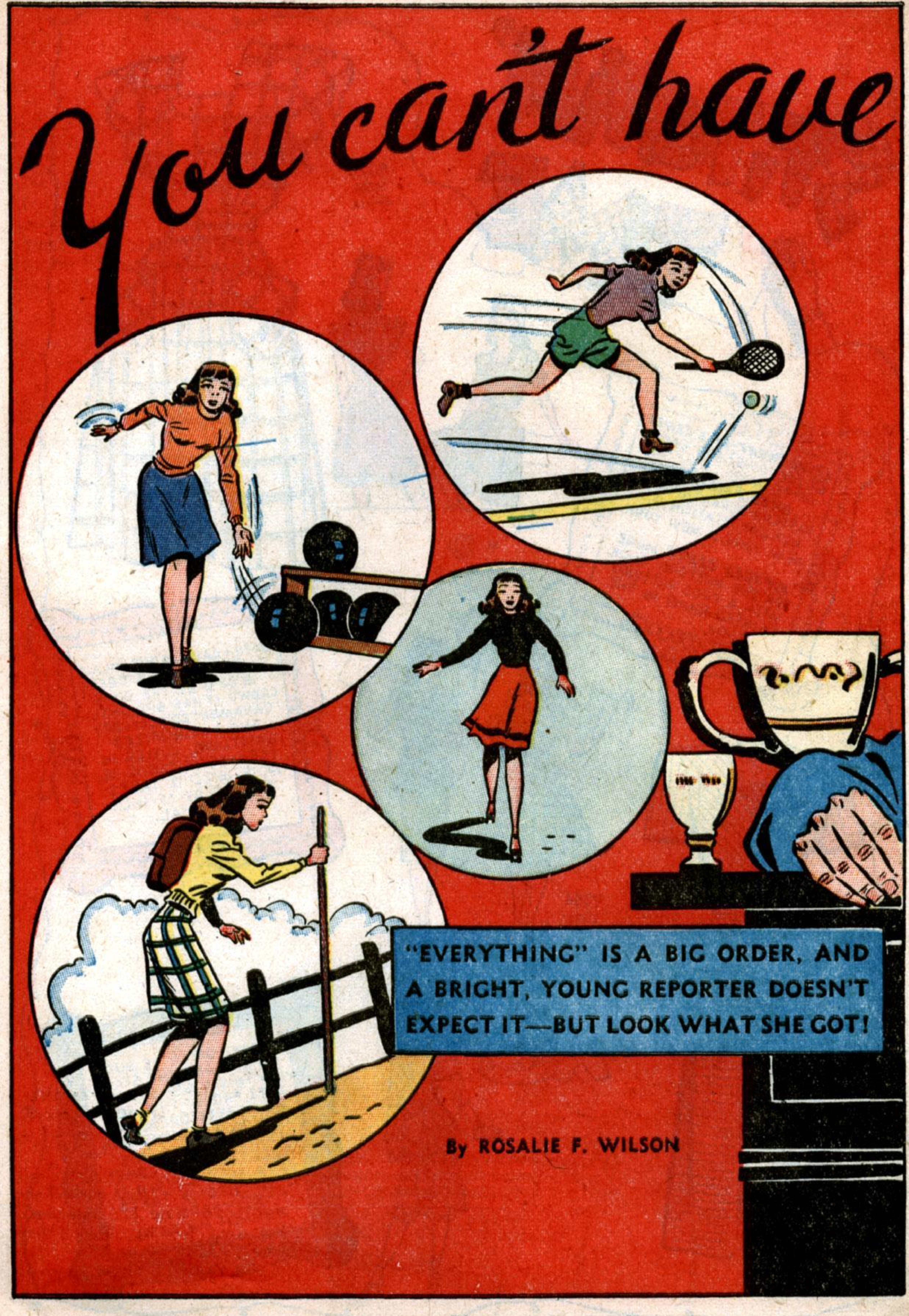
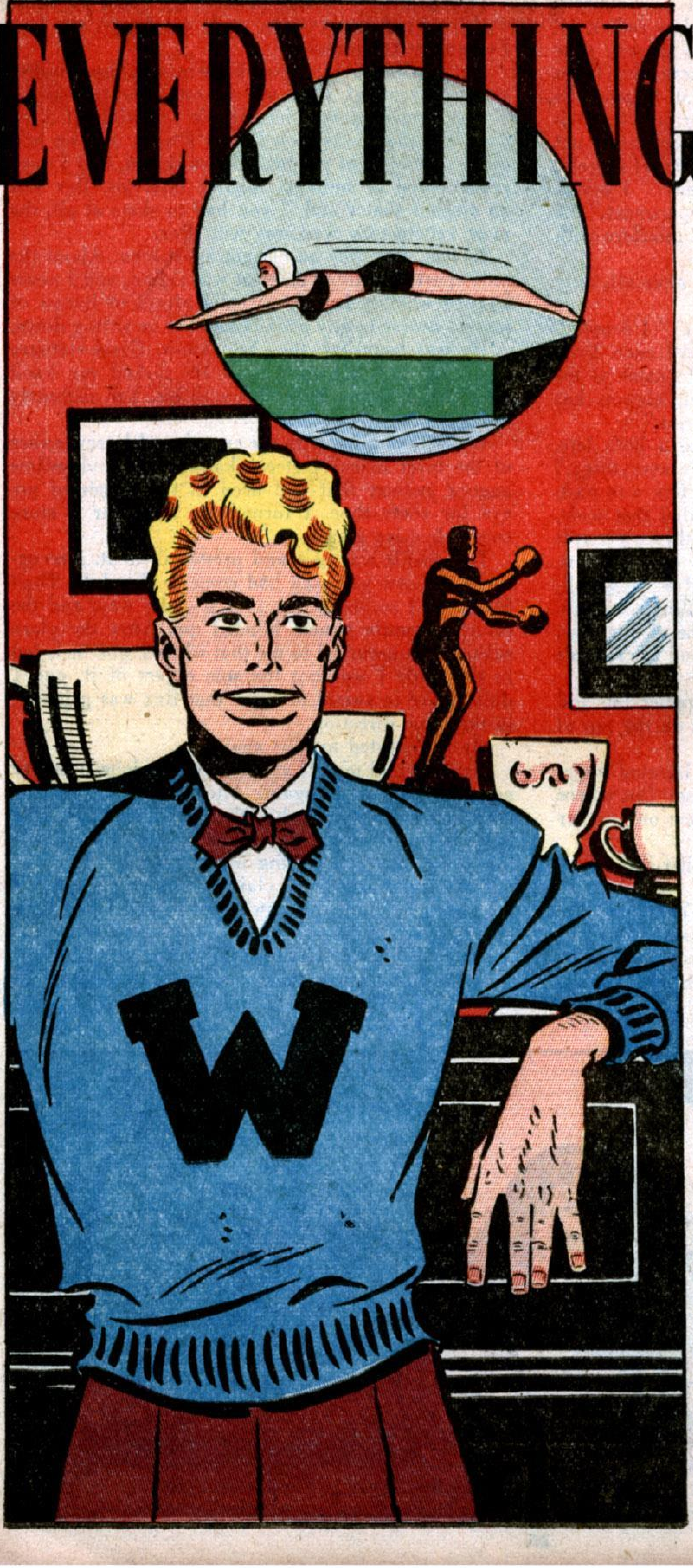


"EVERYTHING" IS A BIG ORDER, AND A BRIGHT, YOUNG REPORTER DOESN'T EXPECT IT—BUT LOOK WHAT SHE GOT!

By ROSALIE F. WILSON



I CAME into the office and slapped my notes down at an empty desk, removed the cover from a creaking old typewriter and began typing up the interview with Miss Fletcher of the English Department. I got about halfway through when I had to take my shoes off, and then I wiggled my toes and sighed a sigh of pure ecstatic bliss.

Just as I finished, Bob Smith came through the door. He skirted my desk and glanced at the paper in my machine.

"Goody," he said. "Our star reporter smashes through again. Neither sleet nor hail nor winds nor . . ."

My copy was two days late, but there was no point in being defensive. "That's the mailman you're talking about," I said coldly.

"No," Bob said. "It can't be. The mailman's always on time."

"I got . . . uh . . . sidetracked," I told him loftily, padding over to the editorial desk in my stocking feet.

He shook his head. "That's the way it is with bunions. You can't get around very fast."

"I—do—not—have—bunions," I stated with quiet dignity. "Nor corns. *Nor fallen arches.* NOR FLAT FEET."

Bob leaned back in the editorial chair and observed me over the heavy tortoise shell frames that rested on the end of his nose. "Superman been insisting on hikes again?"

"You are talking," I said, "of the man I love."

"There is nothing," Bob went on meditatively, "like a brisk five-mile hike on a crisp, windy day. The smell of wood-smoke in the air, the blood tingling in your veins, the oxygen putting roses in your cheeks." He sighed. "No, sir, there's nothing like it."

"How would you know?" I scoffed.

Bob's glance was benevolent. "Why, I read about it. Lots of times. Curled up in front of a roaring fire."

I rubbed my arches tenderly and fell into a chair. Bob pushed another chair close and motioned. "Put your feet up. They'll feel better."

I did, and they did. It occurred to me that Bob Smith wasn't a bad fellow at all. I studied him with new interest. Just a little over six feet, too thin, but rather intelligent looking. The heavy rimmed glasses gave him a definite literary air, although there were times when I wondered why he wore them at all since he seemed always to be looking over rather than through them. He had what is termed a sardonic grin, but his heart, I was newly convinced, was a heart of gold.

"What's my assignment for next week?" I asked.

"Take Schmidt of the German Department," he said mildly. "And if it won't seriously interfere with your romance, *get it in on time*."

What I had mistaken for gold, was, after all, only chromium plate.

"They're good interviews, aren't they?" I demanded hotly. "The faculty hasn't complained once. Even the students read them. The principal beams at me when I pass his office, and your circulation has mounted steadily since I began the series."

I groped for my shoes. "So they're a little late. In this life, my friend, you can't have everything."

When I came down the front steps, Rex was waiting for me. He took my arm and smiled that wide, white smile, and in the background I could see a couple of female freshmen swoon into each other's arms.

Rex was wearing maroon cords and a navy pullover sweater with a maroon W. W for Windsor High. Named Windsor High because the name of our town is Windsor, and it was named Windsor after Rex's great-great-great-grandfather.

Rex still had the remains of his summer tan and his blond hair curled crisp and bright on the top of his well-shaped head.

"Where to?" I asked brightly. I had in mind something cozy like a corner of the Windsor Inn where I could put me on one chair and my feet on another and dreamily contemplate a coke.

"This is Tuesday," he said. "We roller-skate. The rink's open this afternoon."

My arches screamed silent protest. That five-mile hike the day before and then all that dancing at night had left me in a mood for strictly sedentary pursuits. But then I remembered what I had told Bob Smith. In this life you can't have everything.

"Wonderful," I said weakly.

"Good girl," Rex said, and his eyes and his smile and his hand on my arm made me forget my feet. For almost ten minutes.

As we came into the rink there was the familiar subdued roar of steel wheels on wooden flooring almost drowning out the organ's rendition of *Stardust*. The place was crowded, as always, and we hi'd quite a number of people, and we skated, and I even remembered to smile at regular intervals. Rex was an elegant skater and if you had to skate at all, the most satisfactory way was with Rex.

In fact, Rex was an elegant sportsman. About the only sport Rex didn't excel at was riding, and I never learned whether he was actually afraid of horses or merely averse to any activity carried on sitting down.

He was beautiful, too. You know, Greek-statuary beautiful. But human withal. He tucked my hand under his arm and covered it with his. Yes, definitely human.

We were circling with the crowd, and I grew aware of the brief blue velveteen skating skirt and yellow angora sweater that had been in the corner of my eye for some time. I turned my head for a more comprehensive glance.

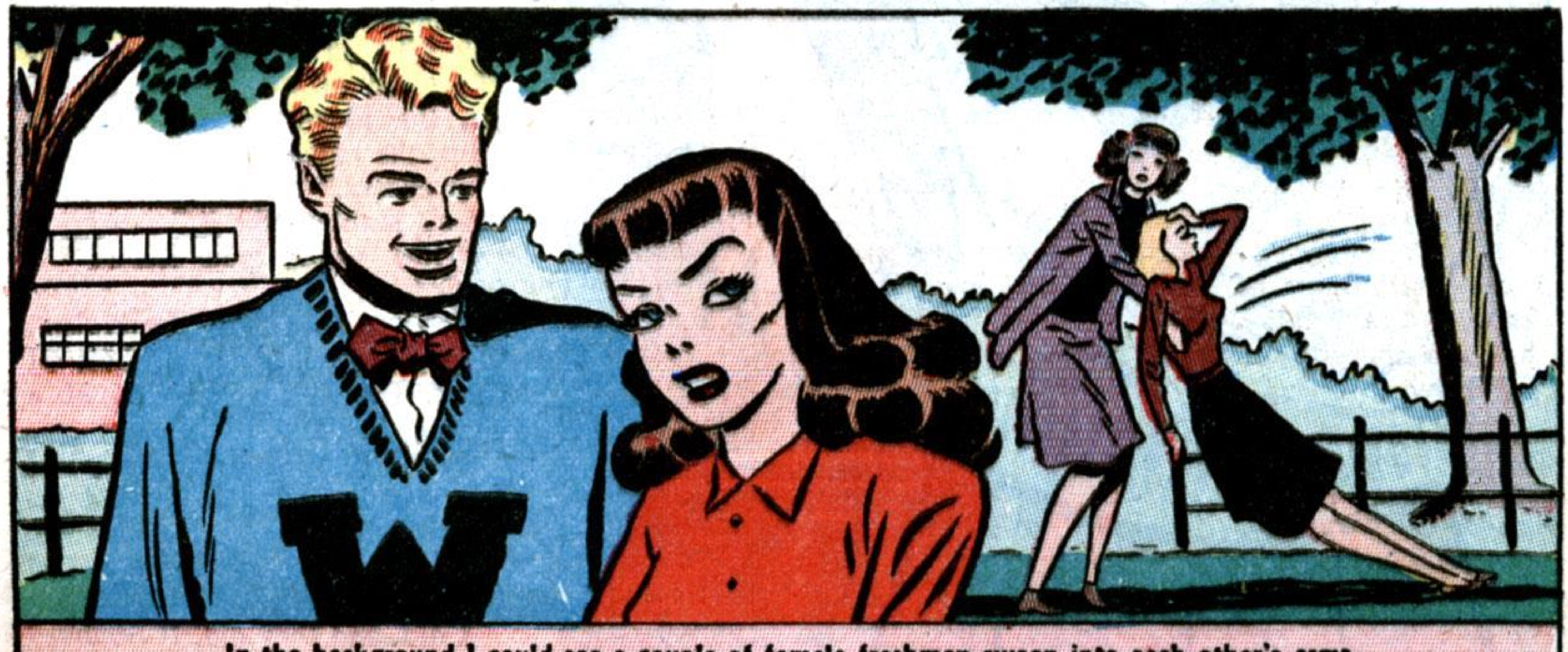
The profile was pert and pretty, all of it. I recognized the new girl who had come to Windsor, Thail Marlowe. I smiled at her in a friendly way, and the returning smile almost blinded me. After the glare subsided, it occurred to me that while I was included in the smile I was not the sole object of it, and I didn't have to swivel to know that Rex was grinning in the same direction.

My feet started to hurt again.

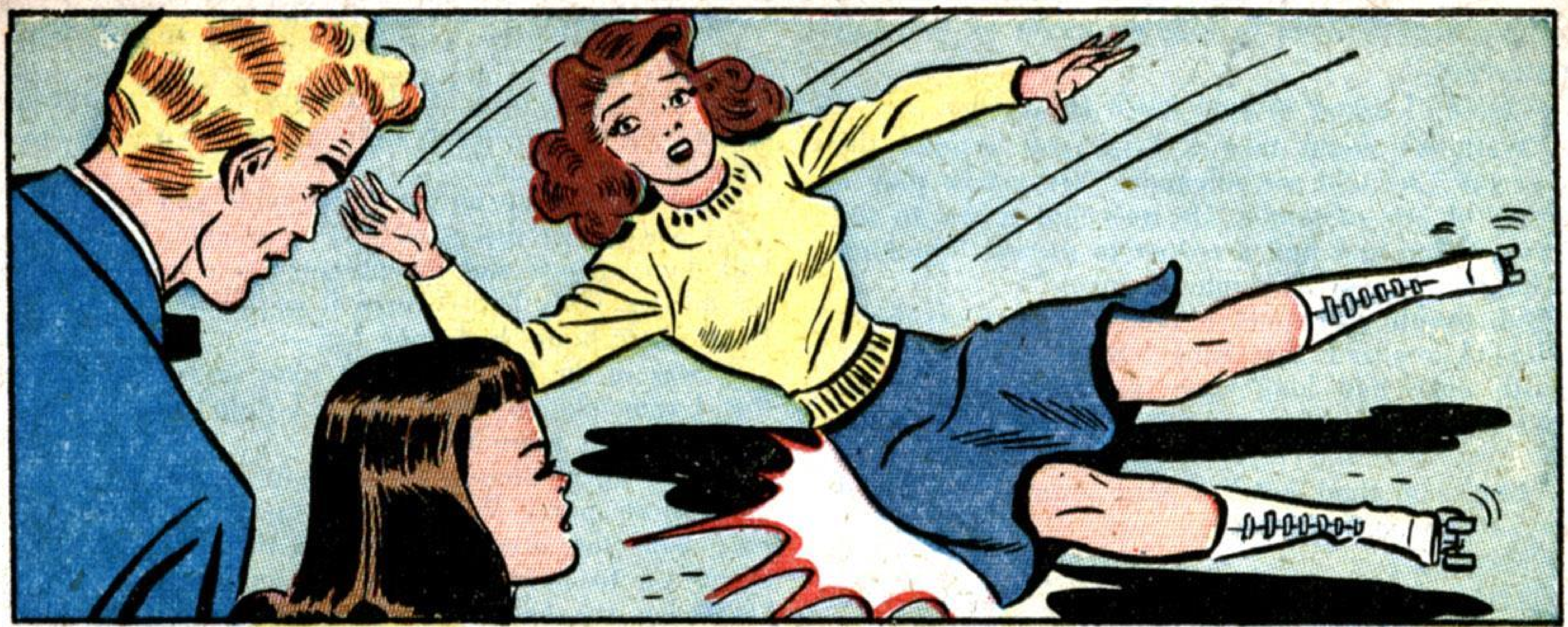
Listen, I told myself grimly. You've done it before and you can do it again. After all, Rex Windsor isn't just anybody. He has that effect on girls. If a thing is worth having, it's worth fighting for. In this life you don't get anything for nothing.

I had established my claim a long time ago, all the girls grudgingly acknowledged it, and I had been able to relax.

I sighed bitterly. Thail Marlowe was new in town, and she didn't know the rules, and I was going to have to teach them to her. And Rexford wasn't going to be any help at all. He never was.



In the background I could see a couple of female freshmen swoon into each other's arms.



Someone cut out from behind us, edged in, tripped, sprawled, but gracefully.

Suddenly I realized that Thail had disappeared, and I felt better. I was just naturally the worrisome type. Thail probably was madly in love with someone else. Undoubtedly she was only waiting for graduation so she could become engaged. I was planning the present I'd bring to her shower when it happened.

Someone cut out from behind us, edged in, tripped, sprawled, but gracefully, and there spread out artistically on the floor were a blue velveteen skirt and a pair of superlative legs. The line opened out around us, and the skaters glided past on either side, leaving us marooned in a small, chummy island of privacy.

Rex helped the girl to her feet, and she clung to him with touching confidence. She smiled at me sweetly. "Oh, hello!"

So I introduced them.

"All right now?" Rex asked.

She bent, touched her ankle, and winced. "It's my ankle, I think."

"Just hold on to me," he told her with grave concern. Since he had just about as much chance of getting away from her as an immature fly in a well-constructed web, I considered this the height of superfluous remarks.

Tenderly he helped her over to the nearest bench, got her comfortably settled and bent and fussed with her laces. Two inches from his attractive nose were the superlative legs.

She looked over his head and grinned at me. Round One had clearly gone to Thail Marlowe.

I bid my tender feet remove me from the scene, and I moved up on the side where they had the little tables and sank into a chair. Someone dropped into the chair opposite and pulled up a third.

"Put your feet up. They'll feel better."

"You," I moaned. "You're exactly what I didn't need to complete a gruesome day."

Bob Smith looked over his glasses at me. "Your nose is shiny. Your lipstick is chewed off. Your bangs are wispy."

Automatically I reached into my pocket for my compact, then reconsidered and slumped back in the chair. Rex was funny about things like that. He didn't approve of untidiness, even occasional untidiness. Rex always looked newly scrubbed, and his standards were exceedingly high.

I glanced over toward the bench. Rex wasn't concerned over my lack of lipstick. He was completely engrossed in an ankle.

"If the view doesn't suit you," I snapped pettishly, "there are other tables. Empty ones."

"I don't mind," Bob said. "Even now you're not a bad looking gal."

It must have been significant of the state of my feelings that even a backhanded compliment like Bob's could make me feel grateful.

"What are you doing here?" I asked. "The value of exercise hasn't suddenly burst upon you in a bright, blinding flood?"

Bob glanced toward Rex and Thail busily conversing on the bench. "I'm the reinforcements."

"Huh?" I said brilliantly.

"Cousin Thail wanted to meet Rex. And cousin Thail is a mighty determined girl. And not altogether stupid. In case she couldn't manage it alone, I was brought along to arrange an introduction."

"She managed fine," I informed him grimly.

"I was betting she would."

"You know so much," I snapped. "What happens now?"

"Now?" Bob said thoughtfully. "I imagine now she'll tell him that her ankle is aching and ask him to take her home."

I removed my feet from the third chair, straightened my spine, whipped out my compact and my comb and repaired the visual ravages. I had barely started buckling on invisible armor when a shadow fell across our table.

"Would you mind waiting a while?" Rex asked. "Thail's ankle is bothering her. I'm going to take her home."

As they disappeared Bob grinned. "He won't be back this afternoon."

"Little you know," I stated belligerently.

"I come from quite a family,' Bob said.

I hated every member of it with a deep, abiding hatred.

"Let's get out of here," Bob said. "Since we seem to have an afternoon to kill, we might as well kill it together."

"How?" I asked without much enthusiasm.

"Well, we could take a brisk trot around the reservoir," he told me solemnly. "Or maybe play a couple of sets of tennis. Or we could repair to the Windsor Inn and find a corner to discuss 'Mankind—Whither?' over a couple of cokes."

Bob Smith was quite a talker. It was six-thirty before I realized that time was passing and the fourth coke had long since disappeared. I'd forgotten that just sitting and talking could be so much fun.

"You're a good guy," I said impulsively. "And maybe you can help me."

"Maybe."

"Tell me something about Thail," I begged. "You know, all the minor details."

"Looking for the chink in the armor?"

I blushed because Bob Smith was practically clairvoyant.

"If I do," he said, "do I get a date for Saturday night?"

"I can't, Bob. I always go out with Rex on Saturday nights."

"No details," Bob said firmly.

But after a week end of strenuous ping-pong with Rex and a one-sided conversation about Thail Marlowe, I staggered wanly into the editorial office on Monday. Bob was typing with two fingers.

"I've got the Schmidt interview," I said. "And that about washes up the faculty. But I have a wonderful idea for a new series," I went on with pretended enthusiasm. "How about an article a week on new students? You know—I could tell where they've come from and why, and their . . . uh, hobbies and likes and dislikes and . . . uh . . . things."

"She comes from New York," Bob said. "Because her father was transferred to Windsor."

"Hobbies?" I asked brightly.

"Saturday night?"

I bowed to the inevitable. "You win."

Saturday night was crisp and cold, and the first light flakes of snow were beginning to fall when Bob arrived with an envelope under his arm.

"Hi," he said, removing his topcoat.

He carried his envelope over to the coffee table in front of the fireplace and sank into one of the twin armchairs. "Feel like going out?"

"Not particularly," I said. "What's in the envelope?"

"A story," he said. "Only I seem to have painted my heroine into a corner. I thought maybe you could help me get her out."

I put my feet up on the coffee table and listened. After a while we discussed it. Five minutes later the hall door opened and my parents came home from the movies. Only I discovered it wasn't five minutes. Four whole hours had gone by.

It was in the hall, when we were saying goodby, that I remembered about Thail. I didn't exactly remember. Bob reminded me.

"Don't worry about her any more," he said. "She hates most sports. We're a sedentary family. It was only with the utmost reluctance that she put the skates on to meet him." He grinned sardonically. "Give her the field for two months of Superman's unbounded vitality, and she'll fade off the scene."

"Honestly?" I asked.

"It's a fact. I wasn't going to tell you, but, well, if you like the guy so much, you're entitled to a break. Thanks for the evening. I enjoyed it."

"I enjoyed it, too," I said softly. It had been a long time since I had enjoyed anything so much. I hated to see him go. I wanted to keep him talking.

"You said she hates *most* sports," I said.

"She's a good horsewoman," Bob said. "She used to ride in the horse shows in New York. She has cups and trophies and stuff."

And suddenly I started to laugh. I laughed until the tears rolled down my cheeks. I wasn't going to stand in Thail's way any longer. If ever two people *deserved* one another, those two did. Thail would hike and bowl and roller-skate and ice-skate whether she liked it or not. Rexford Windsor was a very determined lad.

And Rex would canter and trot and post and gallop because Thail was equally determined.

And after a while Thail's feet would start to hurt. And Rex . . . well, Rex wasn't used to horseback riding.

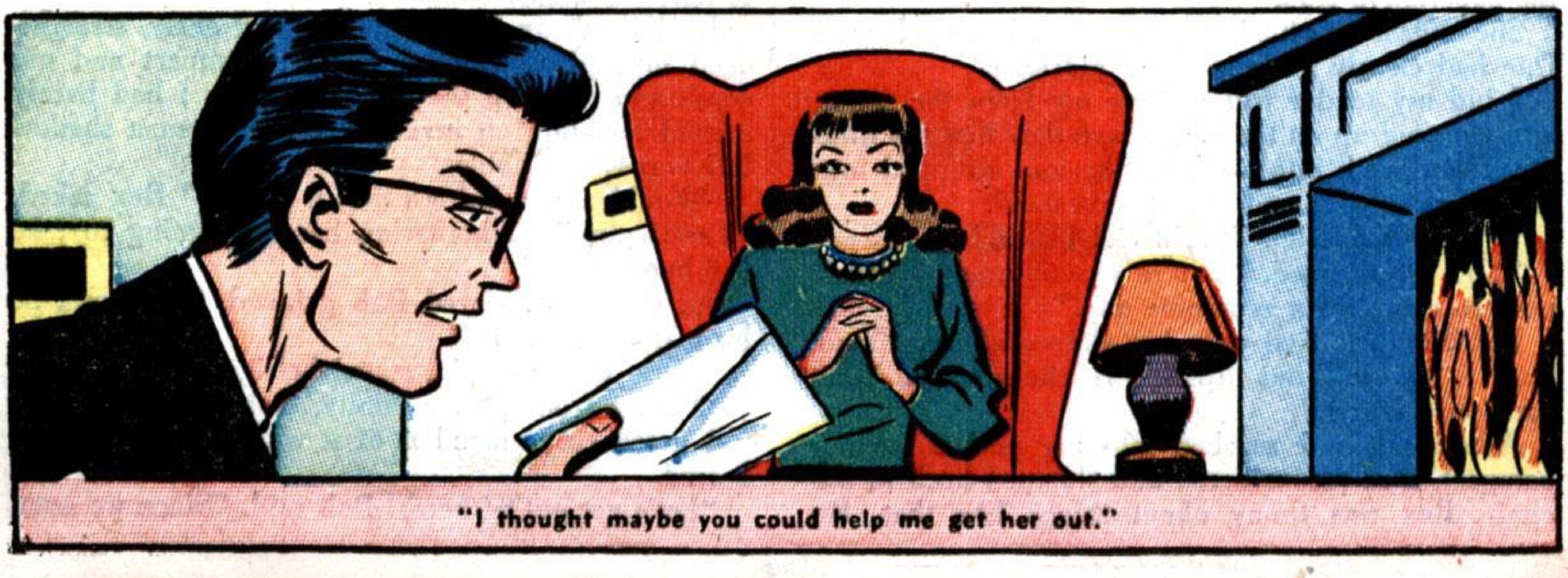
. . . That happened two months ago. Occasionally, on Sunday afternoons I see them ride past in the park, and Rex still bumps in the saddle and his smile looks a little drawn when he waves.

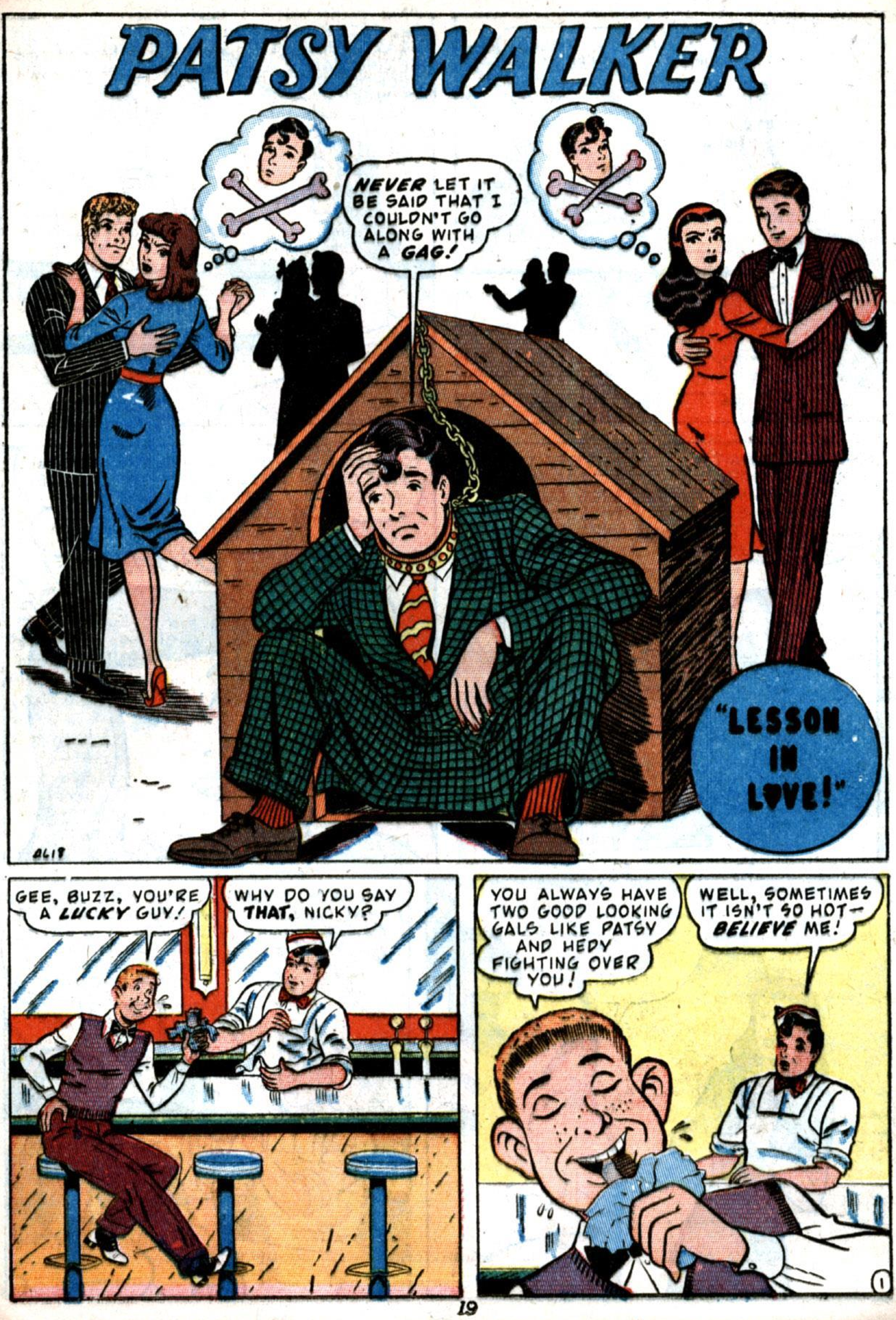
But that's the way it is with life. You can't have everything.

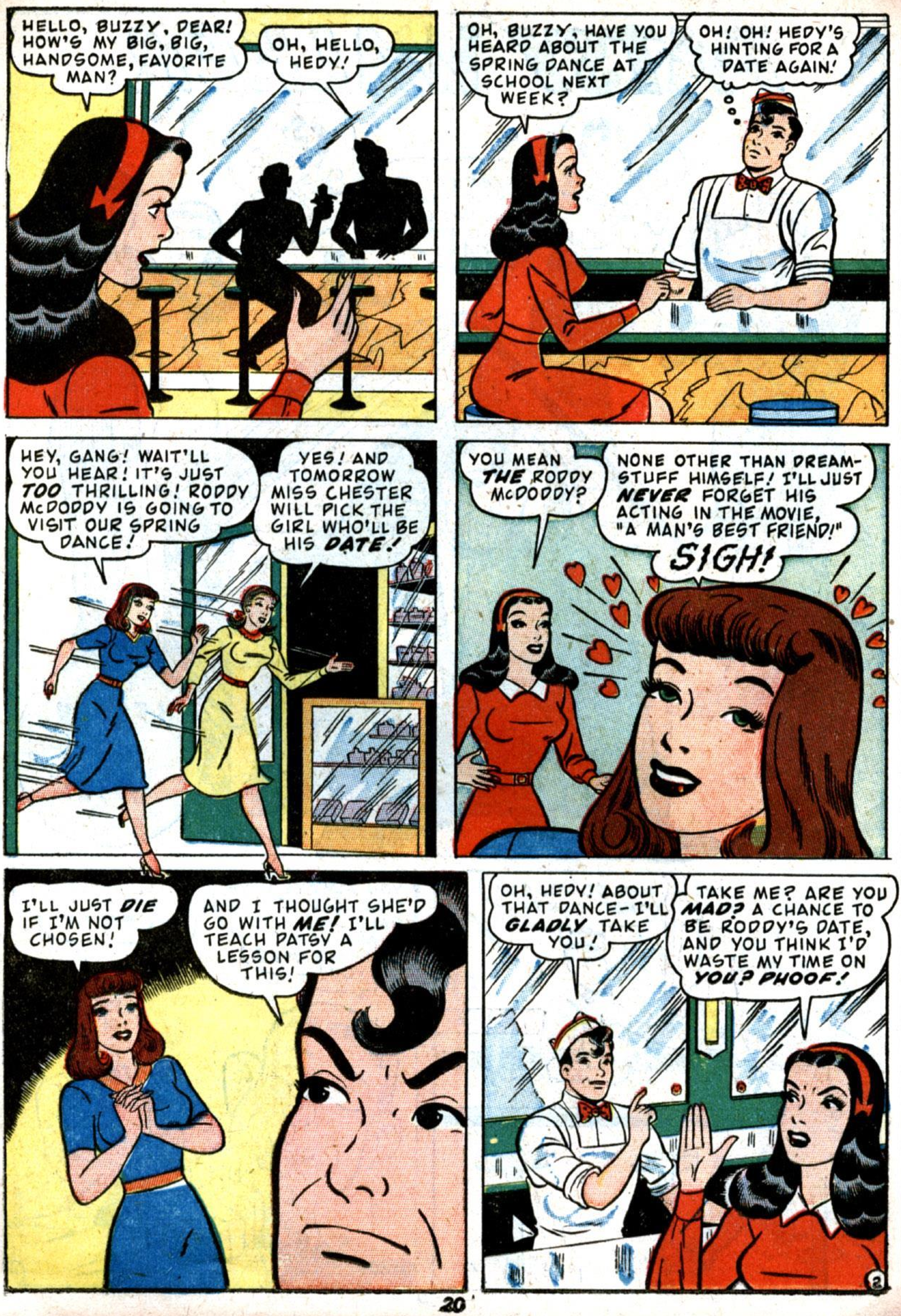
I've got Bob Smith.

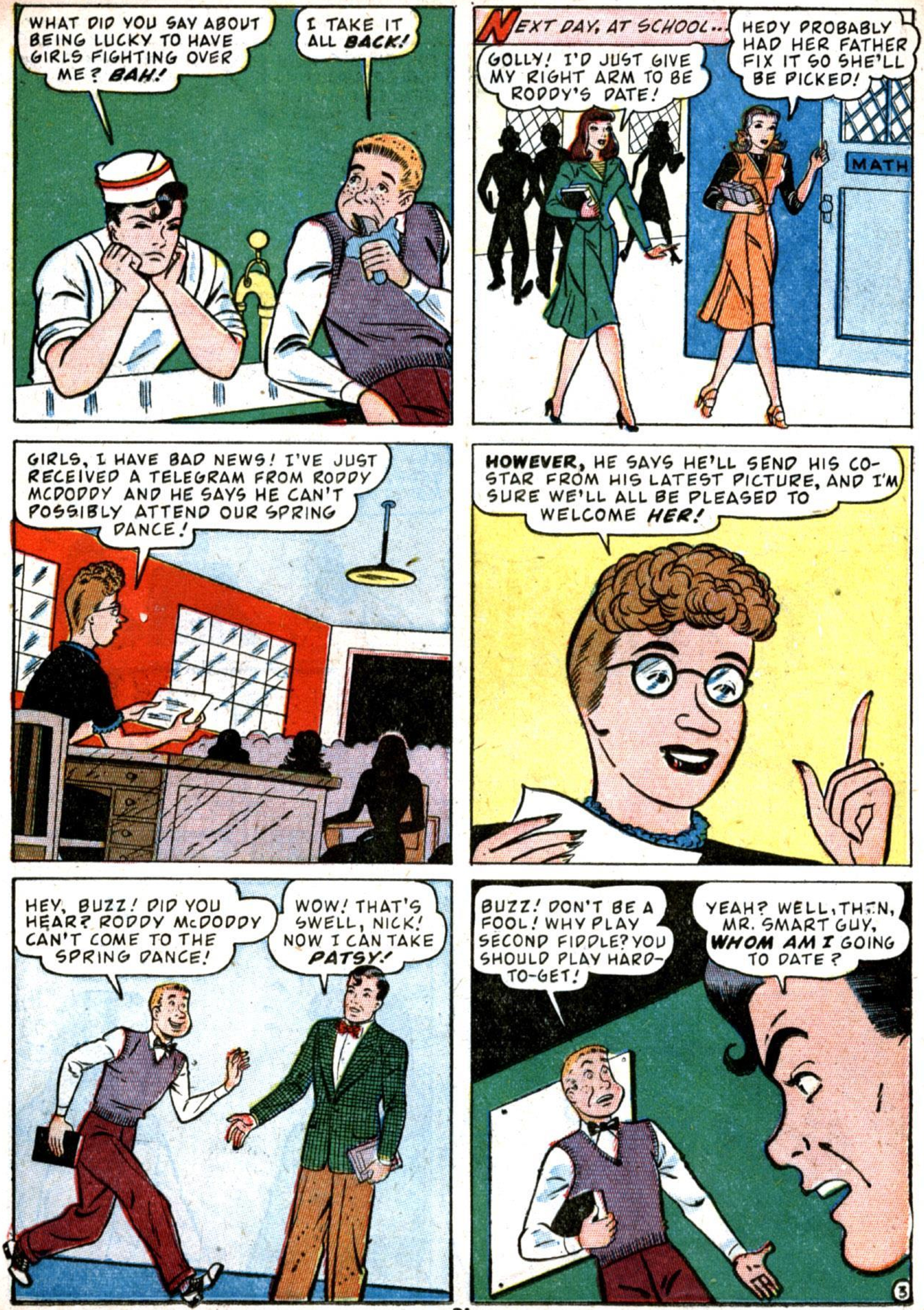
I'm satisfied.

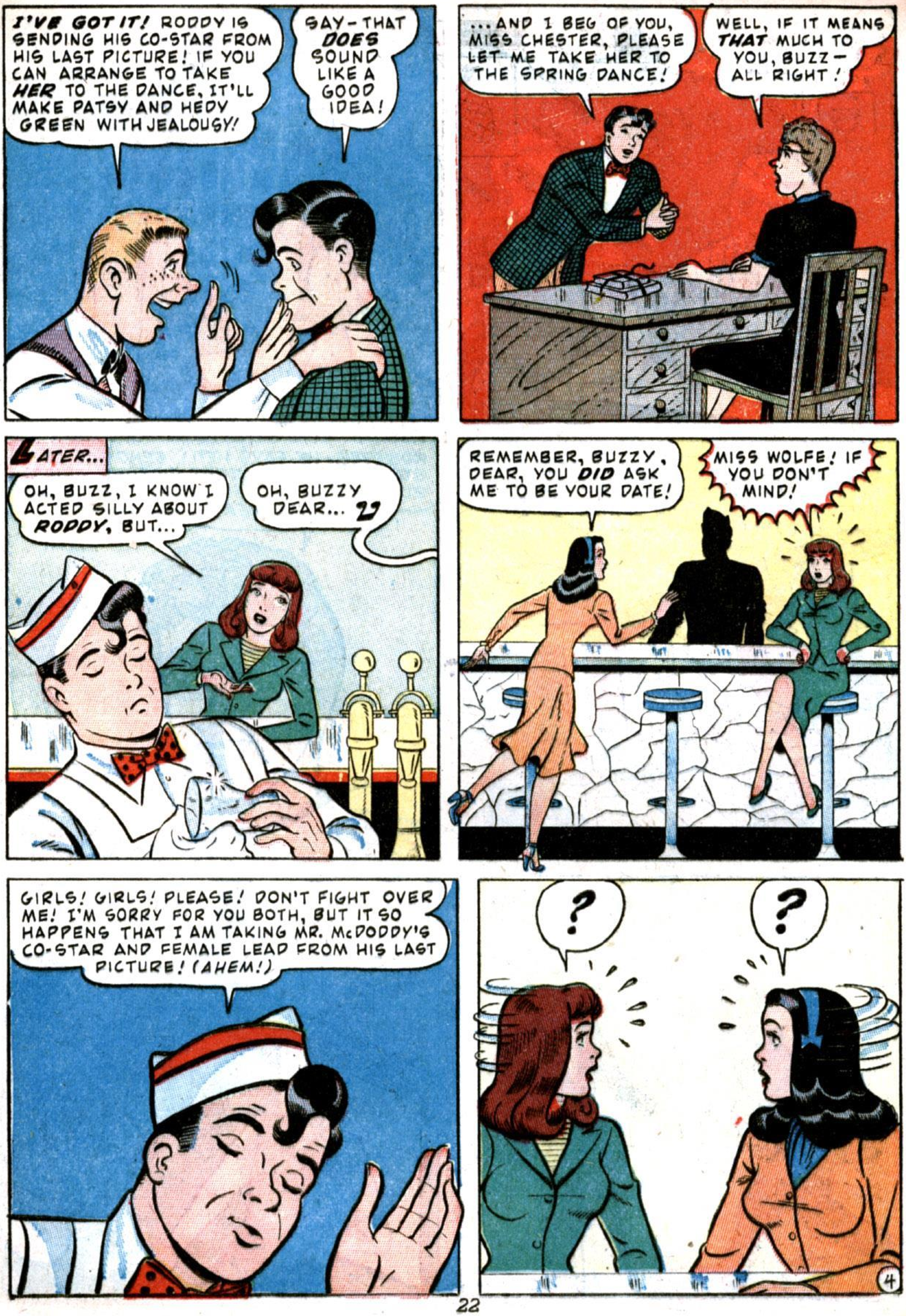
THE END

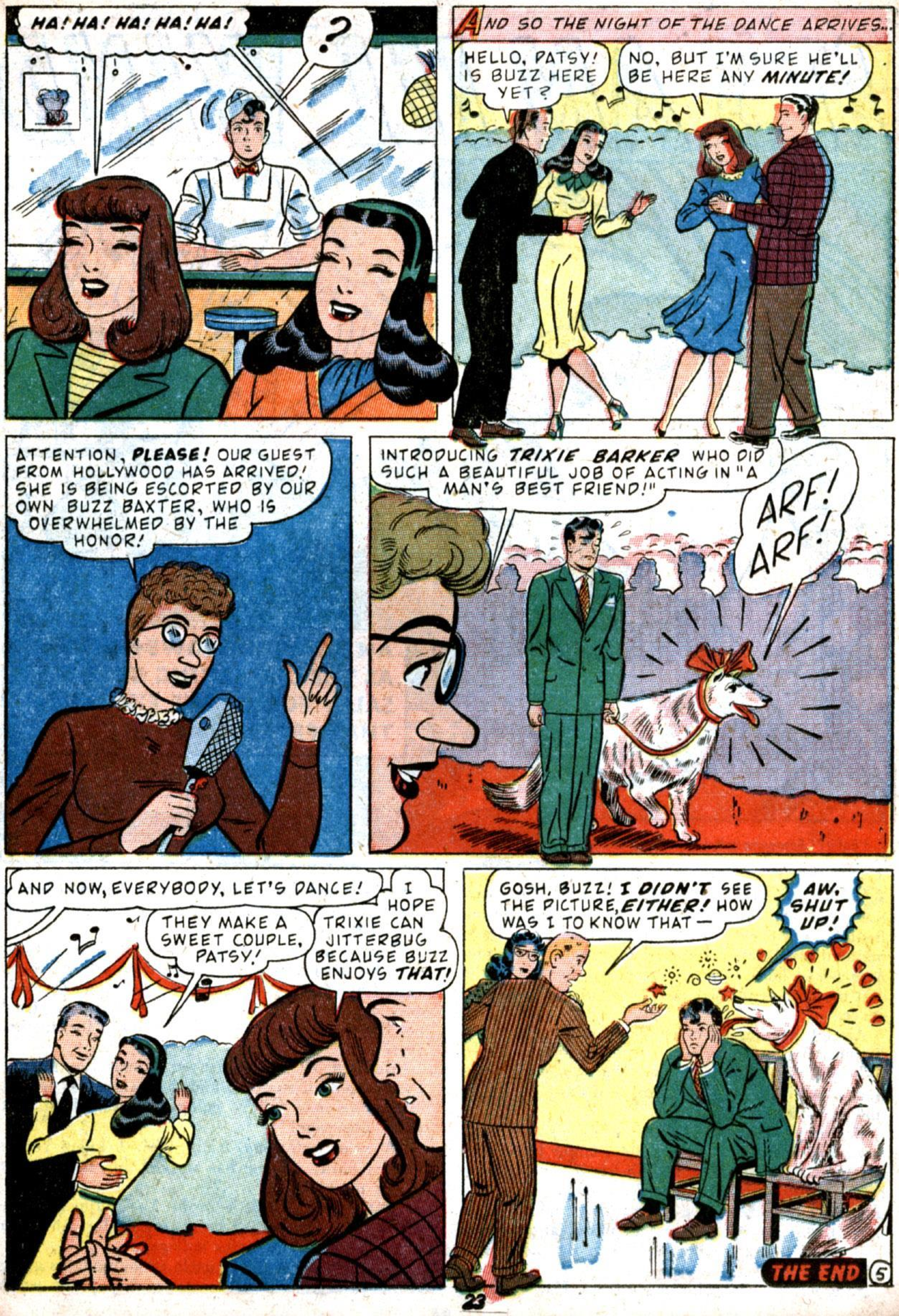

"I thought maybe you could help me get her out."


PATSY WALKER
NEVER LET IT BE SAID THAT I COULDN'T GO ALONG WITH A GAG!
"LESSON IN LOVE!"
AL18
GEE, BUZZ, YOU'RE A LUCKY GUY!
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT, NICKY?
YOU ALWAYS HAVE TWO GOOD LOOKING GALS LIKE PATSY AND HEDY FIGHTING OVER YOU!
WELL, SOMETIMES IT ISN'T SO HOT—BELIEVE ME!
1

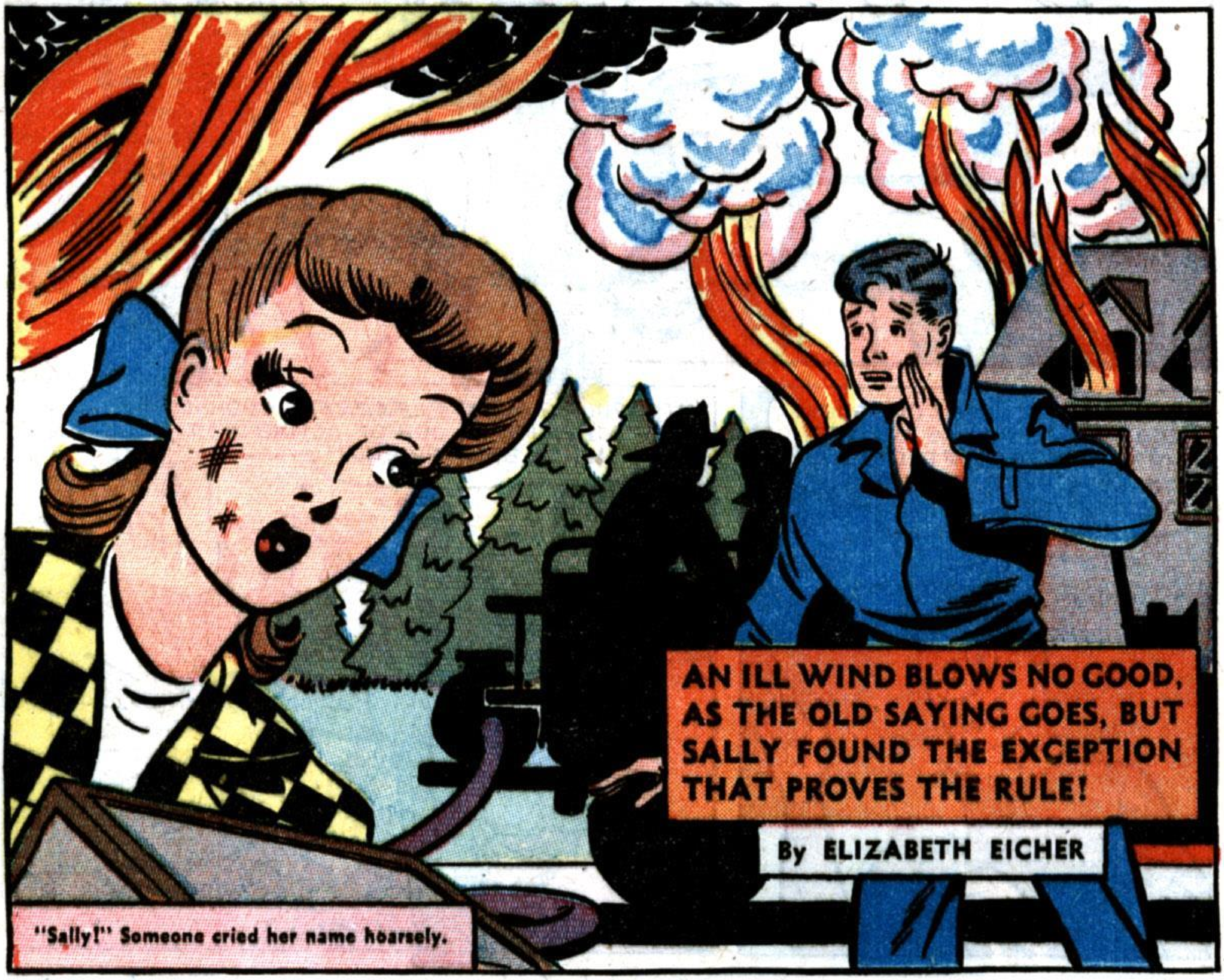

HELLO, BUZZY, DEAR! HOW'S MY BIG, BIG, HANDSOME, FAVORITE MAN?
OH, HELLO, HEDY!
OH, BUZZY, HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE SPRING DANCE AT SCHOOL NEXT WEEK?
OH! OH! HEDY'S HINTING FOR A DATE AGAIN!
HEY, GANG! WAIT'LL YOU HEAR! IT'S JUST *TOO* THRILLING! RODDY McDODDY IS GOING TO VISIT OUR SPRING DANCE!
YES! AND TOMORROW MISS CHESTER WILL PICK THE GIRL WHO'LL BE HIS *DATE!*
YOU MEAN *THE* RODDY McDODDY?
NONE OTHER THAN DREAM-STUFF HIMSELF! I'LL JUST *NEVER* FORGET HIS ACTING IN THE MOVIE, "A MAN'S BEST FRIEND!"
SIGH!
I'LL JUST *DIE* IF I'M NOT CHOSEN!
AND I THOUGHT SHE'D GO WITH *ME!* I'LL TEACH PATSY A LESSON FOR THIS!
OH, HEDY! ABOUT THAT DANCE- I'LL *GLADLY* TAKE YOU!
TAKE ME? ARE YOU *MAD?* A CHANCE TO BE RODDY'S DATE, AND YOU THINK I'D WASTE MY TIME ON *YOU? PHOOF!*
2


WHAT DID YOU SAY ABOUT BEING LUCKY TO HAVE GIRLS FIGHTING OVER ME? **BAH!**
I TAKE IT ALL **BACK!**
NEXT DAY, AT SCHOOL...
GOLLY! I'D JUST GIVE MY RIGHT ARM TO BE RODDY'S DATE!
HEDY PROBABLY HAD HER FATHER FIX IT SO SHE'LL BE PICKED!
MATH
GIRLS, I HAVE BAD NEWS! I'VE JUST RECEIVED A TELEGRAM FROM RODDY McDODDY AND HE SAYS HE CAN'T POSSIBLY ATTEND OUR SPRING DANCE!
HOWEVER, HE SAYS HE'LL SEND HIS CO-STAR FROM HIS LATEST PICTURE, AND I'M SURE WE'LL ALL BE PLEASED TO WELCOME **HER!**
HEY, BUZZ! DID YOU HEAR? RODDY McDODDY CAN'T COME TO THE SPRING DANCE!
WOW! THAT'S SWELL, NICK! NOW I CAN TAKE **PATSY!**
BUZZ! DON'T BE A FOOL! WHY PLAY SECOND FIDDLE? YOU SHOULD PLAY HARD-TO-GET!
YEAH? WELL, THEN, MR. SMART GUY, **WHOM AM I** GOING TO DATE?
3


I'VE GOT IT! RODDY IS SENDING HIS CO-STAR FROM HIS LAST PICTURE! IF YOU CAN ARRANGE TO TAKE HER TO THE DANCE, IT'LL MAKE PATSY AND HEDY GREEN WITH JEALOUSY!
SAY–THAT DOES SOUND LIKE A GOOD IDEA!
...AND I BEG OF YOU, MISS CHESTER, PLEASE LET ME TAKE HER TO THE SPRING DANCE!
WELL, IF IT MEANS THAT MUCH TO YOU, BUZZ– ALL RIGHT!
LATER...
OH, BUZZ, I KNOW I ACTED SILLY ABOUT RODDY, BUT...
OH, BUZZY DEAR... 22
REMEMBER, BUZZY, DEAR, YOU DID ASK ME TO BE YOUR DATE!
MISS WOLFE! IF YOU DON'T MIND!
GIRLS! GIRLS! PLEASE! DON'T FIGHT OVER ME! I'M SORRY FOR YOU BOTH, BUT IT SO HAPPENS THAT I AM TAKING MR. McDODDY'S CO-STAR AND FEMALE LEAD FROM HIS LAST PICTURE! (AHEM!)
?
?
4


HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!
?
AND SO THE NIGHT OF THE DANCE ARRIVES...
HELLO, PATSY! IS BUZZ HERE YET?
NO, BUT I'M SURE HE'LL BE HERE ANY MINUTE!
ATTENTION, PLEASE! OUR GUEST FROM HOLLYWOOD HAS ARRIVED! SHE IS BEING ESCORTED BY OUR OWN BUZZ BAXTER, WHO IS OVERWHELMED BY THE HONOR!
INTRODUCING TRIXIE BARKER WHO DID SUCH A BEAUTIFUL JOB OF ACTING IN "A MAN'S BEST FRIEND!"
ARF! ARF!
AND NOW, EVERYBODY, LET'S DANCE!
THEY MAKE A SWEET COUPLE, PATSY!
I HOPE TRIXIE CAN JITTERBUG BECAUSE BUZZ ENJOYS THAT!
GOSH, BUZZ! I DIDN'T SEE THE PICTURE, EITHER! HOW WAS I TO KNOW THAT —
AW, SHUT UP!
THE END
5

IT'S AN ILL WIND



AN ILL WIND BLOWS NO GOOD, AS THE OLD SAYING GOES, BUT SALLY FOUND THE EXCEPTION THAT PROVES THE RULE!

By ELIZABETH EICHER

"Sally!" Someone cried her name hoarsely.

SALLY DENTON scrambled out onto the rocky ledge and lowered herself onto the last jutting boulder, warm even in the mild winter sun. Three hundred feet below, weathered roofs and stone chimneys poked holes through the pines, and far to the east the blue of the bay swept toward her in a wide curve.

Almost panting from her rapid climb, Sally unbuttoned her jacket. "I'm not just hot," she muttered to herself. "I'm hot under the collar," and her mutinous eyes picked out the chimneys of Barberry Lodge and grew darker still.

Barberry Lodge, the rival hotel in the small resort town, had unwittingly dealt Sally a major blow. Barberry Lodge had taken such a large share of the season's visitors that her uncle's small hotel had had a struggle to make even a small profit. And now Barberry Lodge proposed to attract an even larger swarm of tourists by expanding itself with two additional wings.

Sally's eyes filled with angry tears. Half an hour before she had slammed the door to the tiny office in The Chimneys and had left her uncle sitting dejectedly at his desk.

"There's no use mincing words, Sally Girl," he had said, his keen gray eyes looking deep into her own. "The Chimneys has had a hard season. We've made only a slim profit. I'm very sorry, but I'm afraid you'll have to postpone your schooling for another year."

"But I can't!" Sally burst out. "Uncle Jim, I can't! I've worked all summer, and this is my last year at High. *Everyone* will be going away to school next year! Everyone!"

"A year isn't long, Sally Girl. I know you've worked hard; no one has worked any harder. But maybe the next year . . ."

"But if we've made a profit, Uncle Jim . . ." A profit was what she had been working for. And then a year or two at a junior college.

"Barberry Lodge," her uncle announced, "is going to be enlarged for next season. Any profit we've made this year will be needed to carry us through, with greater competition. Cove Harbor isn't big enough for two hotels."

So that was it. Sally had run off then, up the steep hillside to her favorite being-alone place. Barberry Lodge! And its owner, B. J. Price! *And* his son, Barrett Price! Sally almost hated them all.

It was so unfair, Sally stormed, for wealthy Mr. Price to come here and steal their business. Her uncle had provided her with the only home she remembered, The Chimneys, and now even its very existence was threatened. Price had bought and remodeled the crumbling Barberry Lodge, and in less than a year had made it a dangerous competitor. To make it worse, he wasn't even a hotel man; to him Barberry Lodge was only a plaything.

Had Barrett been the son of anyone else but B. J. Price, Sally had to admit she would have liked him. He had not come to Cove Harbor until the middle of the summer, but had stayed on through the fall, and Sally still saw him around town. Barrett was not yet eighteen, but he had already finished high school, and his time was his own.

"It isn't fair! It isn't fair!" Sally stormed aloud, and pounded the boulder with her bare fist until her hand ached.

"What isn't?" asked a cool voice behind. "There's no future in hammering rocks, you know."

Sally swung around, clutching the rocks to keep from falling. A tall young man with dark hair, carrying a flat wooden box, grinned at her.

"You!" she said scornfully. "It would be you!"

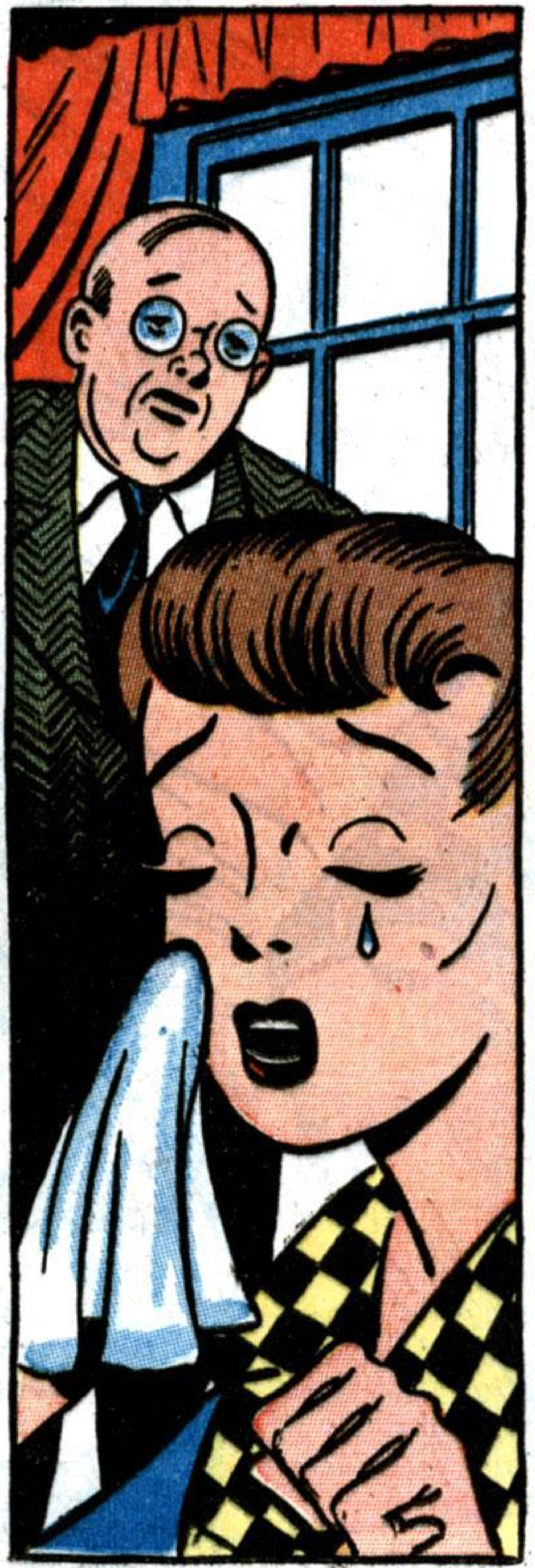
"Well, woman, what have I done? Look out or you'll roll off that rock and break some limbs off those pines below." He pulled her away from the edge, still grinning.

"Don't worry, Barrett Price," Sally said bitingly. "I'll not harm those precious pines of yours. Anyway," she asked suddenly, "who asked you up here?"

Barrett kept on grinning. "No one," he replied calmly. "Didn't know I needed an invitation." He sat down. "I just like this spot, that's all. But what was the trouble when I came in? Someone giving the heroine a dirty deal, I gathered."

"Nothing," Sally said grimly. "Nothing you could ever in this world understand."

"Oh, I dont' know," he said lazily. "I think I'm a little better than a moron."



"But I can't!" Sally burst out. "Uncle Jim, I can't!"

"It was private," Sally said stiffly. "A private conversation."

"Sorry. Next time I'll warn you that I'm approaching."

"There won't be any next time."

"No? That's too bad. Don't go," he said hastily as Sally half rose. "I didn't mean to interfere."

Sally's eyes almost shot sparks. He was still laughing at her. She turned clumsily, and her foot caught the corner of the wooden box. Barrett lunged and seized the handle as it was only inches from the edge.

"It would have served you right," Sally began, and then she saw the almost scared look on Barrett's face. Suddenly she felt ashamed of herself and regretted that she had spoken so rudely. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to kick your possessions around even though it might look that way to you. I know only too well how it feels," she added bitterly.

"It's all right," Barrett answered but he was no longer grinning and he held the box tightly. "It was my mistake, I guess."

Sally stood hesitantly, but Barrett made no further move to stop her nor did he add another word. For some unaccountable reason Sally began to wish she had not been so mean.

"What's in the box?" she asked. "Or is it private?"

"Paints," Barrett answered brusquely.

"Paints?"

"Paints. Oils. Now laugh."

Sally looked at Barrett's flushed face, and she sat down slowly. "I didn't know you painted," she said in a small voice.

"Most people don't."

"Do you— Are you— Have you—?" Sally began to stutter.

"Am I good? No. Not yet. But I could be if I could study," he added almost fiercely.

"Then why don't you?" Sally gazed wonderingly at him. With all the money he had there was no reason why he couldn't study anything he pleased.

"My father," Barrett clipped his words off short, "thinks it would be silly. A waste of money. He wants me to study business."

Misery loves company, Sally thought, and she felt a kind of kinship with Barrett.

"Show me what you've done," she said quickly. "Please show me something, Barrett."

And he did. Two pencil sketches of the valley over which they looked. He had come back to work on the scene again, catch the coloring, paint it later in oils. Barrett's voice was warm as he explained certain points of his sketch, the scene and painting in general. Sally found herself listening with eagerness, and for the time being her own disappointment was forgotten.

In the days that followed Sally found herself watching for Barrett's dark head when she went for long walks by herself. He was still B. J.'s son, and an enemy, and she completely disliked him, she reminded herself, but he, too, was a disappointed person.

Once she saw him far out on a rocky point jutting into the bay, gravely trying to catch the foamy breakers with his pastels.

. . . . Gradually the guests left, until The Chimneys had only a handful to sit around the roaring fire in the huge fireplace. At Barberry Lodge, workmen were making the most of the last few weeks of good weather. Wherever Sally walked, the sound of hammers and ripsaws followed her.

One day she came upon Barrett on her favorite ledge, minus his paint box and simply staring out over the sea of pines.

"You're lucky," he said, "staying here the year round."

"Lucky!" Sally scoffed.

"But you are," he persisted. "Think of this with every branch laden with snow. Think of it in early spring with all the delicate greens." He stopped, blushing. "I sound like a travel folder," he said.

"Think of it so cold that you feel frozen all the way through, for days. Think of the blizzards and storms when no one can get through and even school doesn't keep. Think of that,"

"You'll think of it next year when you're away at school," he said slowly, "and you'll be homesick."

"I won't be away next year," Sally said impulsively. "I'll probably spend the rest of my life doing odd jobs in a small hotel—if The Chimneys can hold out at all," she added bitterly.

Hours and hours of coffee, sandwiches, bandages, smoke, crackling heat, and every now and then a whoosh as some new building went up in flames.

Barrett drew aimless lines on the packed ground with a stubby stick. "You want to leave," he said at last, "and I want to stay. And neither one of us can get our wish. Come on," he jumped up, "I want to get back to Barberry. There was a radio report of a forest fire up in the hills just before I left. I want to see if there's any more news."

"This isn't the season for fires," Sally panted as they scrambled down. "It can't amount to much, thank goodness."

"It would be wonderful to paint," Barrett said musingly.

"Barrett Price!" Sally drew herself up. "A fire that destroys years of growth of timber, and you talk about how wonderful it would be to paint it! Why don't you go away?" She turned and ran off into the woods, angry with Barrett and angry with herself for ever feeling sorry for him.

. Some time later Sally, seated with her back to a huge trunk, stood up stiffly and scolded herself for having indulged in an orgy of feeling sorry for herself all over again.

"It's later than I thought," she said to herself. "It's getting dark."

Then she sniffed, alert. Smoke. Smoke! The fire that Barrett had been talking about! Suddenly Sally began to run. How could she have been so wrapped up in her own thoughts that the smoky haze went unnoticed! "You've been a fool," she scolded herself. "Now get back and get to work. The fire fighters will need coffee and sandwiches, and all the help you can give them."

The streets of the little town were strangely quiet. Not a single man or boy was in sight. Here and there a few women stood quietly together, facing the north, not talking, their faces drawn.

"What's the latest?" Sally panted.

"It's coming closer. They've given up twice and had to make new stands."

A small truck piled with knobby bundles tied in old quilts and sheets tore down the highway. Sally stared after it in amazement.

"But they don't have to run away," Sally said dazedly. "It won't come into town."

The taller woman looked Sally up and down. "They've been evacuating children by boat for the last hour," she said calmly, and then turned away.

Sally stumbled on. It couldn't be. The forest fire wouldn't come into the town and through people's homes. It couldn't do that. Suddenly she thought of The Chimneys, and she began to run again.

"Uncle Jim! Uncle Jim!" she called desperately, but he, too, had joined the fire fighters. Two maids and the aged yard man were huddled in the empty lobby.

"We'll be burned in our beds," moaned one of the maids.

"Nonsense!" Sally declared. "We've work to do. Make coffee—gallons of it. And sandwiches." Sally sounded more confident than she felt.

Sally hurried into the office. What should she save? Whatever it was, it would have to be light enough to carry. But where could she go? If the fire was coming closer, maybe it would ring the town. The women had said the children had left by boat. Was that the only way open? Sally tried to swallow the lump in her throat.

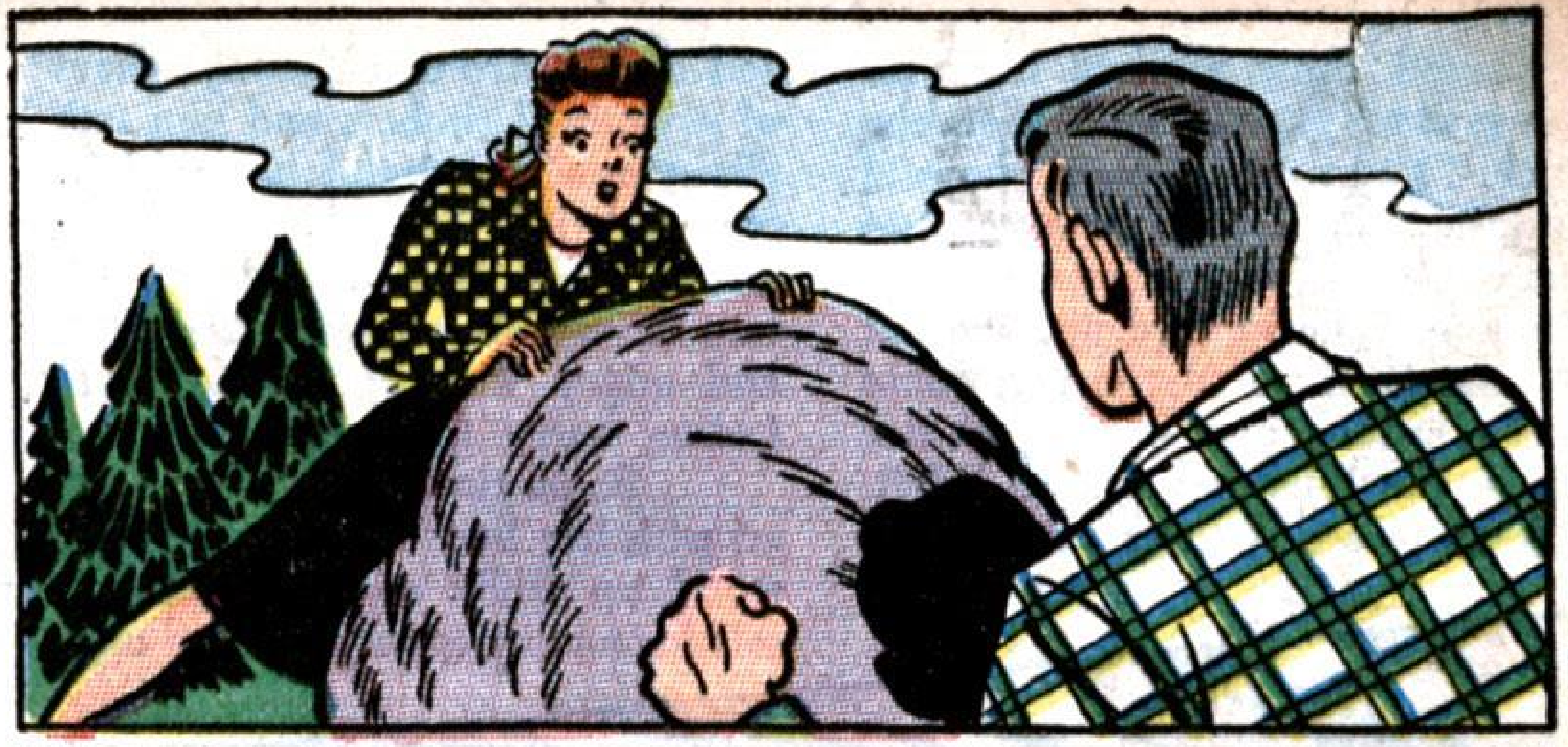
She could hear shouting down the street, and she ran out to the curb. A car of blackened, tired, fire fighters was unloading. Sally ran up to them. Maybe Uncle Jim had come back.

The men brushed by her, their eyes red from smoke, their clothes dirty, their faces lined with weariness.

"Sally!" Someone called her name hoarsely. Sally looked at the stranger, and gasped. It was Barrett.

"Sally," he said, "go down to the docks. Don't try to go back to The Chimneys for anything. We've come in to clear out the rest of the people. Then we'll try to make another stand somewhere."

"But the town . . ." Sally choked. "We can't save it."



Sally swung around, clutching the rocks to keep from falling.

"Then get your drawings! Get them, Barrett, and give them to me! Quick!"

Barrett hesitated, then sprinted toward Barberry Lodge. Sally, left standing by the empty car, tried not to think. Fire licking with long tongues down the street, swinging from pine to pine, wrapping around the houses, flaring up over the roofs? Fire sweeping through The Chimneys?

"The Chimneys!" Sally screamed hoarsely. "The Chimneys! We have to save The Chimneys!"

Barrett, almost out of earshot, hesitated, stopped, ran back. "Get the men back here," he ordered. "Get everybody! We'll make a stand on the next street. We'll save The Chimneys!"

"But, Barrett," Sally began

'Get going, Sally!"

"Barrett, Barberry Lodge! Barberry Lodge will go if you do that. Your paintings!"

Barrett brushed by her, ran down the street calling for help, while Sally stood helplessly behind. "He can't do it," she moaned to herself. "He can't let them burn just to save The Chimneys for me."

. . . Then she, too, was running, getting help, pouring coffee at the docks while the thick smoke swirled around her, helping the doctor treat minor burns. Hours and hours of coffee, sandwiches, bandages, smoke, crackling heat, and every now and then a whoosh as some new building went up in flames.

Then someone shaking her shoulders and speaking to her in a tone of hope.

"We've stopped her, Sally Girl—we've got it licked at last. And The Chimneys is saved!"

"Uncle Jim," she quavered. "Barberry Lodge?"

"It's gone. Every stick of it."

"Oh."

"We didn't want a fire, Sally Girl, but there's good news in it for us at that. Price isn't going to rebuild. He's fully covered by insurance so he won't lose anything. But he's giving up hotel keeping."

"Oh, great," said Sally, thinking of her year at college. Then she thought of Barrett and his paintings, and suddenly she felt as unhappy as she had ever been.

"The Chimneys is saved, Sally," said a new voice in her ear, and Sally turned to the grimy Barrett.

"Barrett, your paintings,' she began again.

"Woman, the needle's stuck in the groove," he grinned. "You said that before."

"But . . ."

"But nothing. I can do them all over again next season—that is, if I get the chance. If there's a room at The Chimneys . . ."

"There'll always be a room at The Chimneys," Sally declared. "In the winter when every branch is laden with snow, and in the spring with all the delicate greens . . . Come on, Mr. Press Agent, a toast to Cove Harbor and The Chimneys."

THE END

FOOD FOR FUN

CAKE, COMING UP! . . .

Everybody's supposed to bring something to that club party, and you just can't think of a *thing* . . . Well, cheer up. Here's a party-brightener if there ever was one. And simple enough to make yourself.

Just beat the yolks of 5 eggs and add to them a cup of sugar and a cup of melted butter. Sift 1¾ cups flour with ¼ teaspoon salt and 4 teaspoons baking powder. Add gradually to the egg mixture, alternating with ½ cup of milk.

Flour lightly a cup of raisins and ¼ cup chopped citron and add them to the cake mixture, blending well. Last, fold in the stiffly beaten egg whites and turn the batter into a greased loaf pan. Bake in a moderate oven for 50 to 60 minutes—until a straw comes out clean.

No icing needed—and it goes great with anything from spiced punch to just plain milk.

SUMMER SALAD . . .

Wilting from the heat? Or do you just want a salad that's a bit different? Either way this grapefruit and romaine platter is the answer.

Wash and separate the romaine leaves carefully so they won't break. Discard imperfect leaves, or keep them to use next day in a torn green salad. Rinse them again in ice water, shake, and set them in a colander in the ice box to crisp.

Peel the grapefruit close to the fruit, removing all membranes, so that each section is clear and whole. Marinate pieces in lemon juice and a little good olive oil, and chill them.

When ready to serve, wipe each romaine leaf carefully so it is completely dry, and dip each in French dressing made with lemon juice instead of vinegar. Arrange the leaves, stems towards center, on a round platter, and place the grapefruit sections in the center. Pour French dressing over all. If you like, garnish with crescents of avocado for taste and color.

This salad must be quite cold to be at its best. But at its best it can't be beat!

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the MONUMENT

GUARDING MEMORIES CAN BE A FULL TIME JOB, BUT ROCKY HAD TO LEARN HOW IMPORTANT IT WAS TO KNOW ABOUT LIVING, TOO!

By JUSTIN DEWEY TRIEM

The gelding swerved sharply and instantly was riderless.

REMEMBERING Dad was always easy. He stood fixed and permanent in Rocky's mind, an image which could be threatened, yes, but never destroyed. Now that threat had become grim reality and Rocky knew she must face it alone. Mother had made it quite plain that . . . the decision was Rocky's.

Mother had just said, "I don't believe you care much for Mark, dear." She hesitated and Rocky, busy with the cake mixture, knew instinctively that Mrs. Gilbert was looking at her. Perhaps there was resentment in Mrs. Gilbert's eyes as well as in her heart. Perhaps . . .

The older woman continued, "You never were one to hide your feelings, Rocky. You're so much like . . . your father."

There was silence in the big sunny kitchen. Silence save for the subdued whipping of the spoon against the sides of the mixing bowl as Rocky continued to bend over the cake mix, beating faster and faster until her hand fairly dissolved into a blur of flying motion, keeping tempo with her hammering heart.

It wasn't fair to push the responsibility onto her shoulders, Rocky thought angrily, blinking back a film of tears. Certainly not when there were others to whom such decisions rightfully belonged. Those who were obligated to decide for themselves, but who didn't have the . . .

No, perhaps it wasn't quite that. But if not, what was it? Why had Mother put it this way? Why—

"Your father was a very wonderful man, Rocky." Mrs. Gilbert spoke with a new softness. "I loved him as dearly as you. But . . . there are factors which I can't contend with alone."

"You could have hired someone to take charge of the ranch," Rocky protested sharply, "someone who would at least know what to do!"

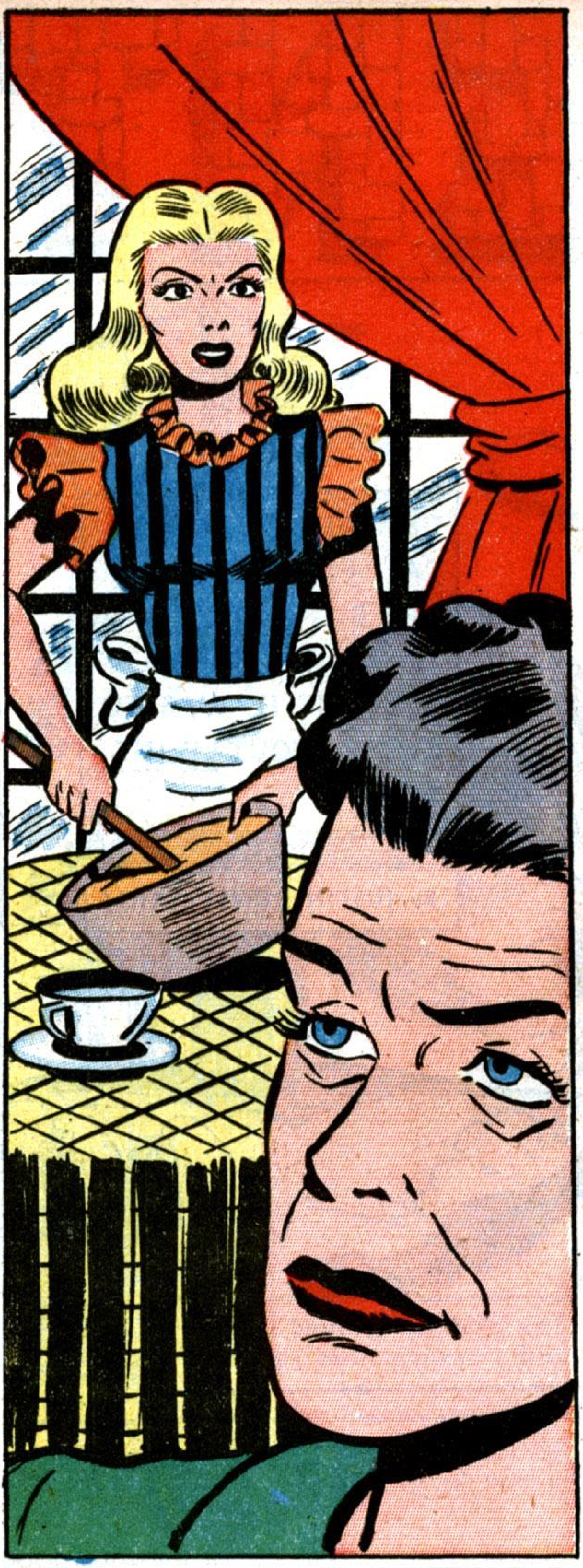
Those last words were a bitter accusation.

"If I thought—" Mrs. Gilbert broke off the words, but they remained there in the silence of the big kitchen, floating around like storm clouds.

Rocky knew what they would have been. If Mrs. Gilbert thought Rocky and Mark wouldn't get along, there wouldn't be any marriage. All Rocky had to do was say she didn't like Mark and he'd be sent packing.

Grudgingly Rocky thought about Mark, realizing with a touch of uneasiness that he hadn't been here in the house all morning. He had gone away somewhere into the hills, riding the big chestnut gelding, which was an example of Mark's incompetence. The horse was raw, unbroken . . .

And Mark didn't know horses and hadn't, to Rocky's knowledge, ever ridden anything but the city subways and busses. Although



"You could have hired someone to take charge of the ranch," Rocky protested sharply.

Mother had never elaborated about Mark when she wrote, Rocky hadn't expected to find him small and frail-looking and so very pink. Nice in his way but hardly suited to this life. And riding the chestnut gelding . . .

"What are you thinking, dear?"

The cake mix was ready. "About Mark," Rocky admitted firmly.

"You see, Rocky . . . it is four years now since your father was killed. I—I'm still young enough. There is no reason for shutting myself away from the world. And . . . you won't be here forever."

"Then it isn't just someone to run the ranch."

Mrs. Gilbert's fine, still beautiful face, colored softly. Looking at her critically, Rocky realized Mark could not be blamed. When he had first appeared on the pages of the letters Mother wrote, and later at the ranch house with his luggage which had seemed just as shining and defenseless here in the foothills as had Mark seemed himself, Rocky started wondering what Mark was thinking when he proposed.

Was he really in love with Mother for herself alone? Or . . . was it that she was the sole owner of a profitable ranch? If that were it—

"It isn't just the ranch, dear. But if you—"

"I'll get along with Mark all right." Rocky spoke sharply. She poured cake batter into the pan with nervous fingers. Here it was again . . . " 'If you don't care for Mark, just say so and I'll send him away . . .' "

No, I can't say anything, Rocky knew, although it isn't fair of Mother, even *Mother*, to push this onto me. It's up to her to make these decisions. She's old enough, or perhaps *young* enough, to know what she wants. So far as Mark is concerned . . .

Suddenly Mrs. Gilbert said, "I wonder where Mark is. I—he isn't very—experienced—"

Rocky sighed. "He'll be all right. Besides I'll go look for him. You watch the cake and don't fret. Mark will be all right."

. . . Riding Ten Spot back into the hills gave Rocky further time to think about Mark and Mother and the ranch. Trying to be fair with everyone concerned wasn't easy and even now there was the shadow of Dad over it all.

Rocky realized Dad had been in a class all his own. Tall and strong and as brown as the hills he dominated, Dad had had a straightforward, noisy way about him. The gelding would have been no problem at all. Dad wouldn't have been thrown once.

But Mark didn't seem the over-courageous type. That was the way Rocky had sized him up from the start. He was too pink and too . . . timid . . . to take adversity.

But evidently Mother loved him.

Rocky tried now to shut the thought of Mother—and even of Dad—from her mind and to concentrate upon the business of finding Mark, who had been gone longer than he should have. Mark had been active around the big ranch in the few weeks he had been visiting there. Often he had ridden off into the hills or down the valley on some errand concerning the ranch. Sometimes he had been gone for hours. But he had never taken the gelding for more than short jaunts. In the past, from what Rocky had seen, Mark was being extremely cautious. Perhaps a little too much so. Perhaps it hadn't been caution so much as . . . fear.

Rocky continued into the hills. The trail was a main avenue of travel from the ranch and Mark had probably come this way.

The sun was hot. The trail dipped and tilted. Uneasiness crept into the girls' thoughts. Where had Mark gone? Rocky's heart seemed a little faster now as her blue eyes swiftly took in the upheaval of hills, dimpled with little valleys and brown-grassed knolls. Nothing seemed alive.

Where was Mark?

"Scoot," Rocky told the bay, and Ten Spot broke into a grudging trot. They followed the trail over the hill and around the brow above a canyon. The sun beat down upon the rocky slopes. The trail dipped sharply, heading for the edge of the timber which had fallen away from the brow of the knoll—

Rocky suddenly drew rein, twisted in the saddle to stare down into a valley far below. Her breath lumped in her throat.

Down there in a little opening in the woods, surrounded by the silent hills, were a man and a horse. A chestnut gelding ridden by a man who, looked upon at closer range, would have appeared timid and pink and . . . citified . . .

As she stared down Rocky saw the scene explode into sudden action. The chestnut reared suddenly high into the air, dancing on stiffened hind legs.

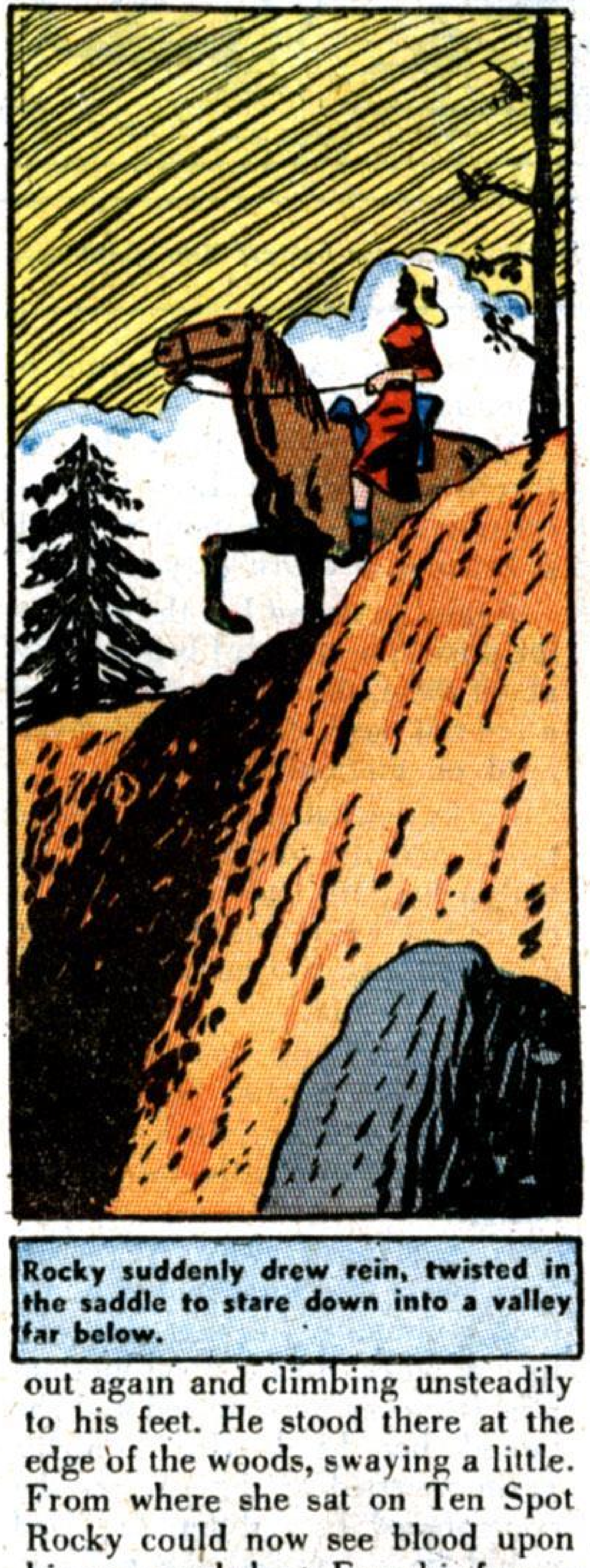
Unprepared as no doubt he had been, Mark was hurled clear. He struck the ground in a rounded heap, rolled over and came up to his feet. The gelding danced away a short distance, shaking his head, turning his path to come back a few steps and stop to stare at his rider. Mark was limping toward him.

A cry froze in Rocky's throat as she watched Mark climb into the saddle once more. Again the powerful animal went into a wild dance, and it was like watching a desperate battle between man and beast —a battle which had perhaps been going on for hours. Instinctively Rocky knew this was not the start but the finish—

Again the chestnut gelding exploded into the air, came down upon stiffened forelegs, crow-hopping across the little clearing. He straightened out suddenly, racing across the narrow space, headed for the dense brush, seeming for a second about to go thundering into it head on, only to change his course abruptly.

The gelding swirved sharply and instantly was riderless. Rocky cried out as Mark's flying body crashed into the thick brush. He'd have his clothes half torn off. His face would be ripped to ribbons. If he didn't have broken bones—

If he did have, they didn't keep Mark from crawling painfully back out again and climbing unsteadily to his feet. He stood there at the edge of the woods, swaying a little. From where she sat on Ten Spot Rocky could now see blood upon his arms and chest. Even his face—



Rocky suddenly drew rein, twisted in the saddle to stare down into a valley far below.

Once more the gelding had circled and come back to stand silent and motionless watching the man who had attempted unsuccessfully to subdue him. After an almost breathless moment, a moment of tension that sent the blood pounding in Rocky's head, it seemed as if Mark had had enough. As if he were beaten and couldn't take it—

Once more Mark moved forward. He limped laboriously to where the gelding waited. The big animal tossed his head angrily, reared away—

After two attempts Mark swung into the saddle, leaned forward to gather the reins in his hands. He straightened, expecting the eruption, waiting for it, prepared in his way . . .

"Scoot," Rocky cried to Ten Spot and the animal plunged forward down the steep trail. A second later the forest closed about them, shutting from her vision the tableau down there in the clearing. The desperate battle between man and beast—

What would happen to Mark this time? The gelding was unpredictable. He might become so angered he'd kill Mark as he lay stunned upon the ground. It could happen. Mark evidently didn't know the terrible danger he faced.

Ten Spot plunged across a stream running noisily along the canyon bottom. A moment later they broke from the edge of the woods and into the clearing beyond.

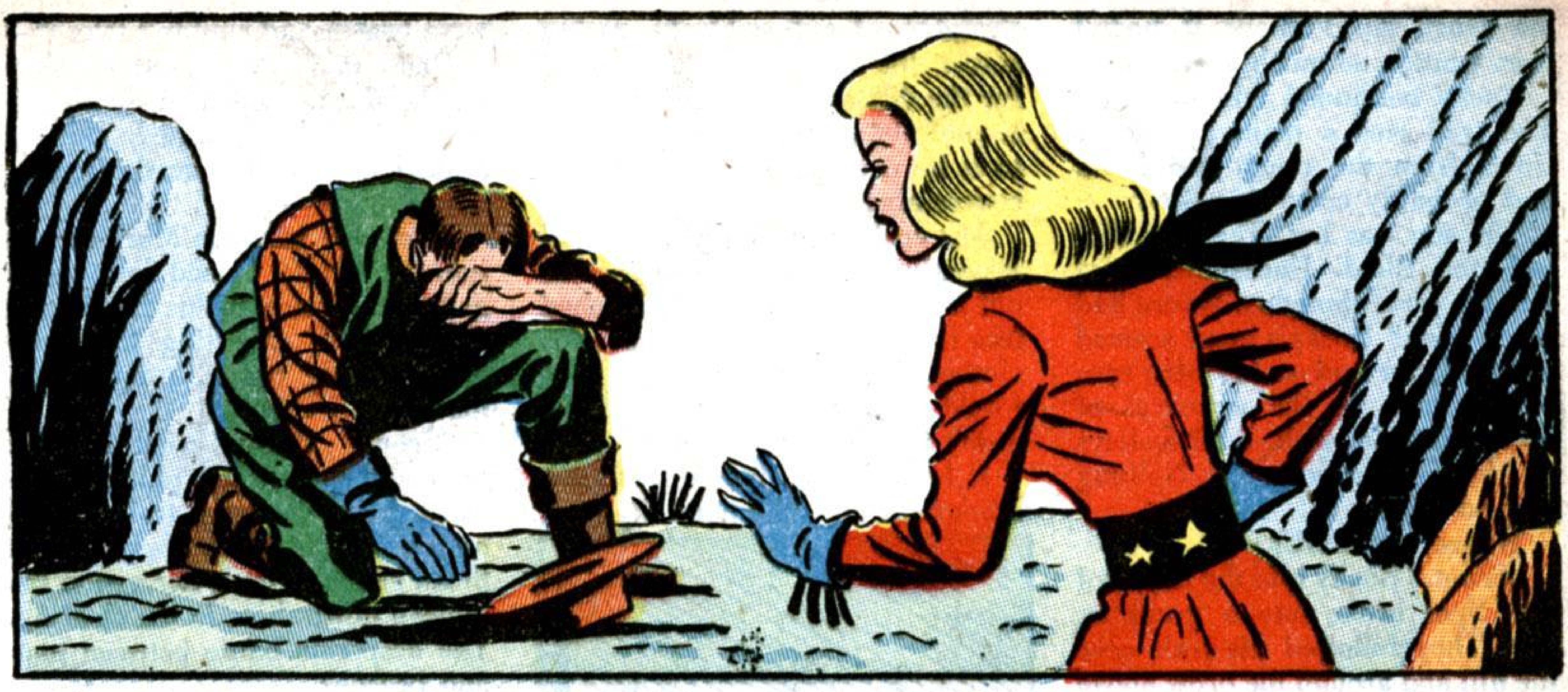
Mark was lying in a heap on the earth, his torn and bloodied shirt showing where he had last fallen. The gelding was trotting around in a circle, was stopping to shake his head challengingly at the approaching horse and rider.

Rocky was off Ten Spot almost before the bay had stopped, Even as she swung down Mark rolled slowly over. He was somewhat dazed as he stared up at Rocky, making a half conscious effort to rise, only to sink back again. One hand groped for his ankle.

"You fool!" the girl cried. "Don't you know better? You could have ridden another horse—"

Mark was grinning now. The stunned look was gone from his eyes, and he wiped one forearm across his face, leaving a trail of dirt upon his skin. It wasn't so pink just now, Rocky realized with a slight start. It was tan, seemed to have lost most of its . . . newness.

"Where is . . . the gelding?" Mark's voice was rough and unsteady. He climbed to his feet, swaying a little and Rocky put out a hand.



"You fool!" the girl cried. "Don't you know better? You could have ridden another horse—"

She was sure Mark was going to try again and that he would keep on trying. She told herself, I'm wrong about him. He has what it takes. He's tough and unafraid. He's—

But suddenly she knew that she was wrong. For Mark grinned crookedly and said jokingly, "I guess—that's all for me!"

Anger and humiliation lumped in Rocky's throat and she stepped back, as if Mark had struck her across the face. Eyes blazed at him fiercely. This was the man mother wanted to marry, whom she thought wonderful enough to bring here to the ranch to take up where Dad had left off. How could she ever have been fooled by whatever line he had handed her? Was it only Mark she was interested in? And if so how could she love him after having loved a man as courageous as Dad?

Rocky's lips curled with anger. "I—I thought so. You're scared! You haven't the—the nerve! You're a—a quitter!"

They faced each other, and through her blazing defiance Rocky noted the calmness of Mark's face, the utter lack of reproach or anger. He didn't even have the courage to defend himself!

Mark said slowly, "I don't know, Rocky." He hesitated and his eyes strayed beyond her, as if looking toward something she could not see. His face remained calm, expressionless, completely devoid of humiliation.

He continued, "I think, Rocky, there's a dividing line between courage and . . . the point at which it becomes a threat to your life!"

Again no sound but the wind in the pines, the rustle of brown grass about them, the tenuous whistle of a red-tail hawk circling high overhead on motionless wings.

Rocky hesitated between uncertainty and the anger still boiling within her. He had said, *There is a point at which courage becomes a threat.* How had he meant that? Could it be that—

As if reading her uncertain thoughts, Mark said, "Courage is a wonderful thing, Rocky. But a dead hero is of little use to the living!"

Mark stepped away. Again his eyes swept the hills and sky. He took a limping, hesitant step and then another. Rocky stood motionless. Her eyes were misted and she bowed her head. Her thoughts again reverted to the past as she remembered how differently Dad would have handled the gelding. In his bold, noisy, hard way, Dad would have subdued the animal in no time at all . . .

And another picture flooded back into her mind as if it were unfolding before her eyes at that very moment.

The time they had brought in the killer, an untamed foothill cayuse, breathtakingly beautiful, wild-eyed and savage, fighting for his life and freedom. Slim Hagen had been thrown and injured. Dad had taken over then and had ridden the animal for a good fifteen minutes, until the air was thick with dust-fog. Then, in the murky yellow mist it had happened, before Rocky and the others had realized and before a ringing rifleshot had suddenly ended the enraged screaming of a golden, wild horse . . .

It had been too late then to save Dad. But . . . he hadn't given up. He hadn't called it quits . . .

And now there was Mark, who had been thrown and who had given up finally. Mark who intended to remain.

If only Dad had done that, Rocky realized. If only he hadn't been quite so courageous—

Rocky squeezed her eyes, forcing out the tears. She opened them and saw Mark half way across the clearing. And suddenly she heard her voice calling him, saw him turn and look back.

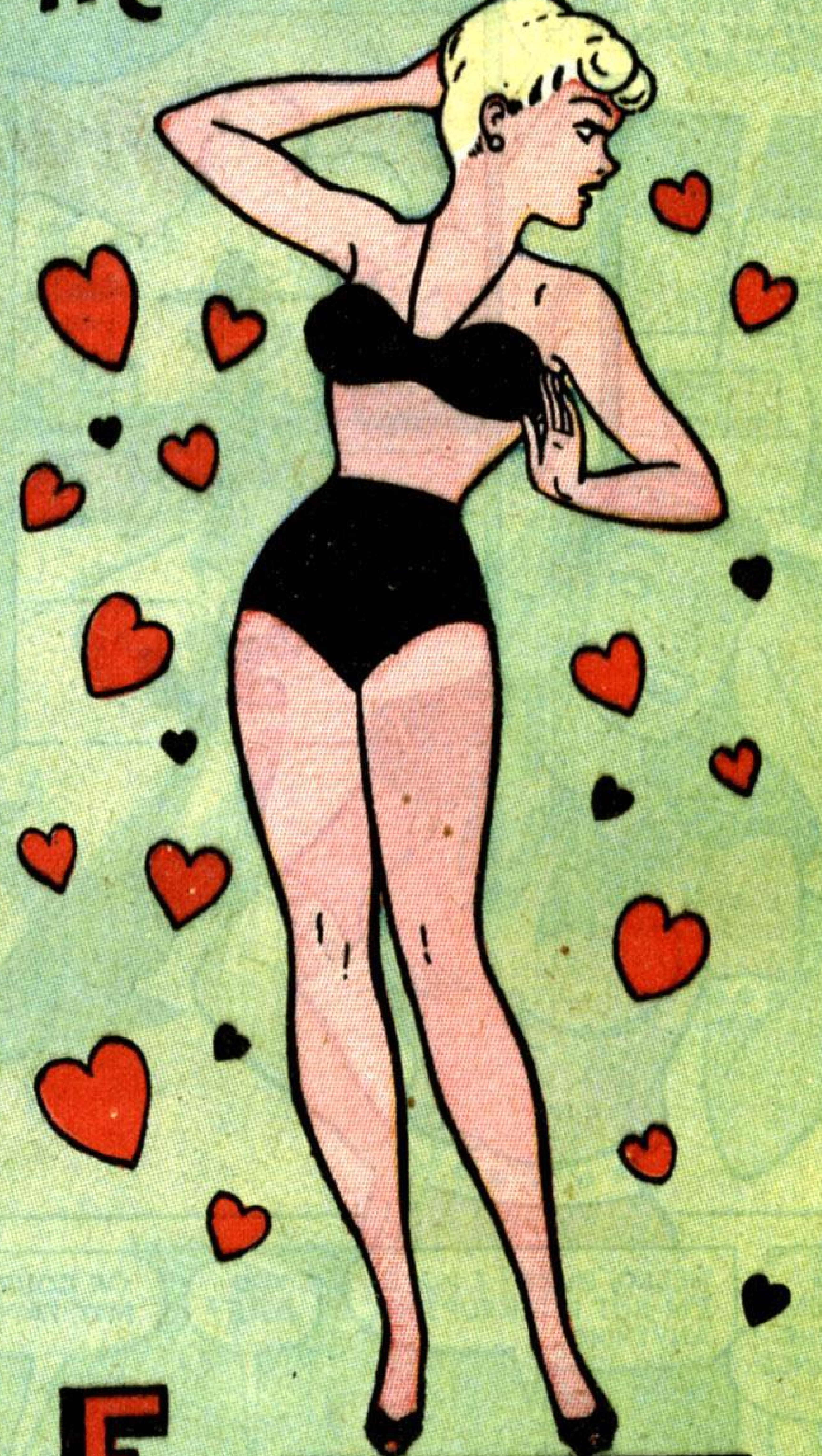
"Mark . . . Mark, wait for me . . ."

As she hurried after him, half laughing, half crying, she realized she was glad, so very glad. Mark would succeed. He wasn't the bravest by any means, but he had something else almost as important.

He knew when to be courageous and . . . when to quit.

THE END

Meet Millie!



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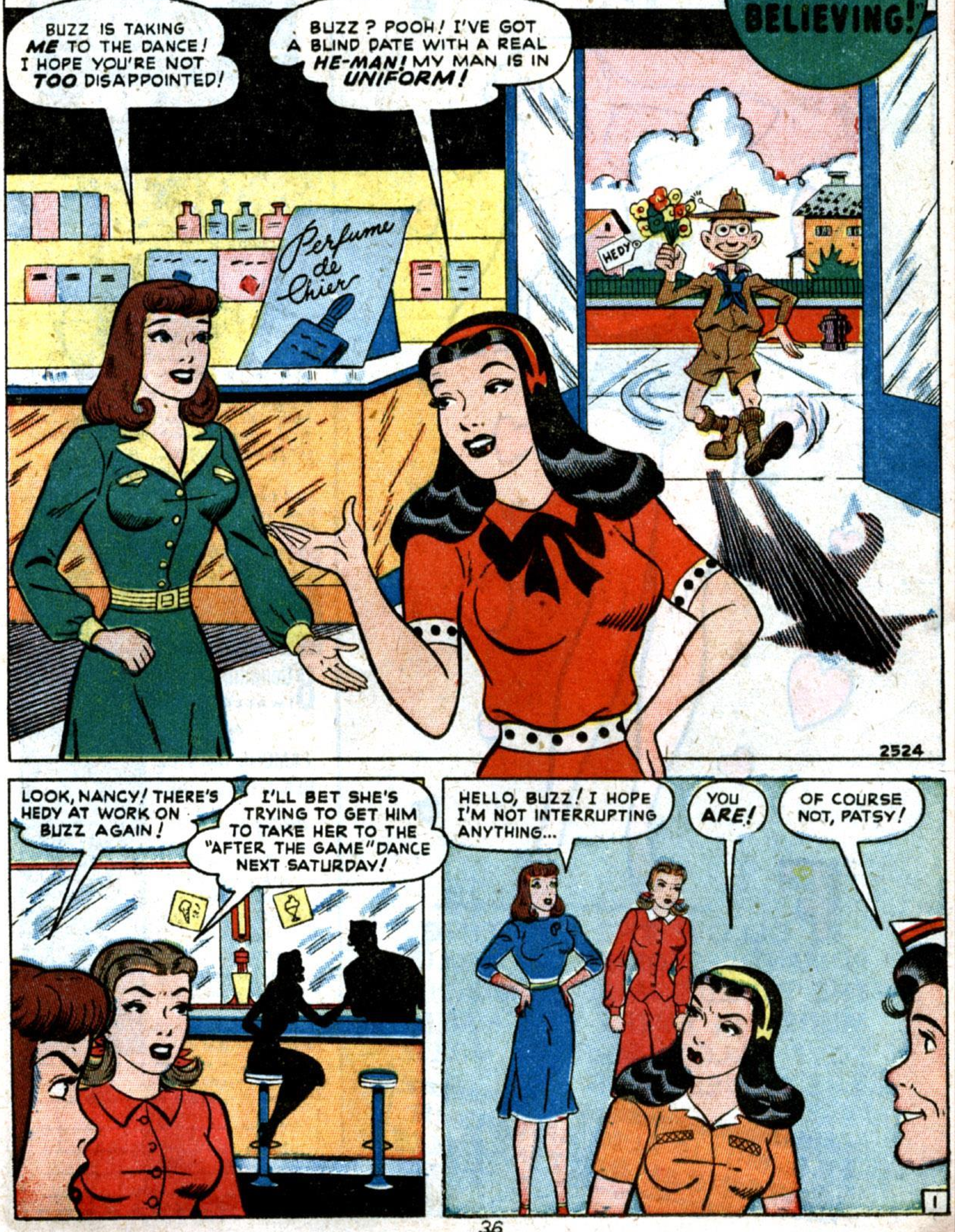
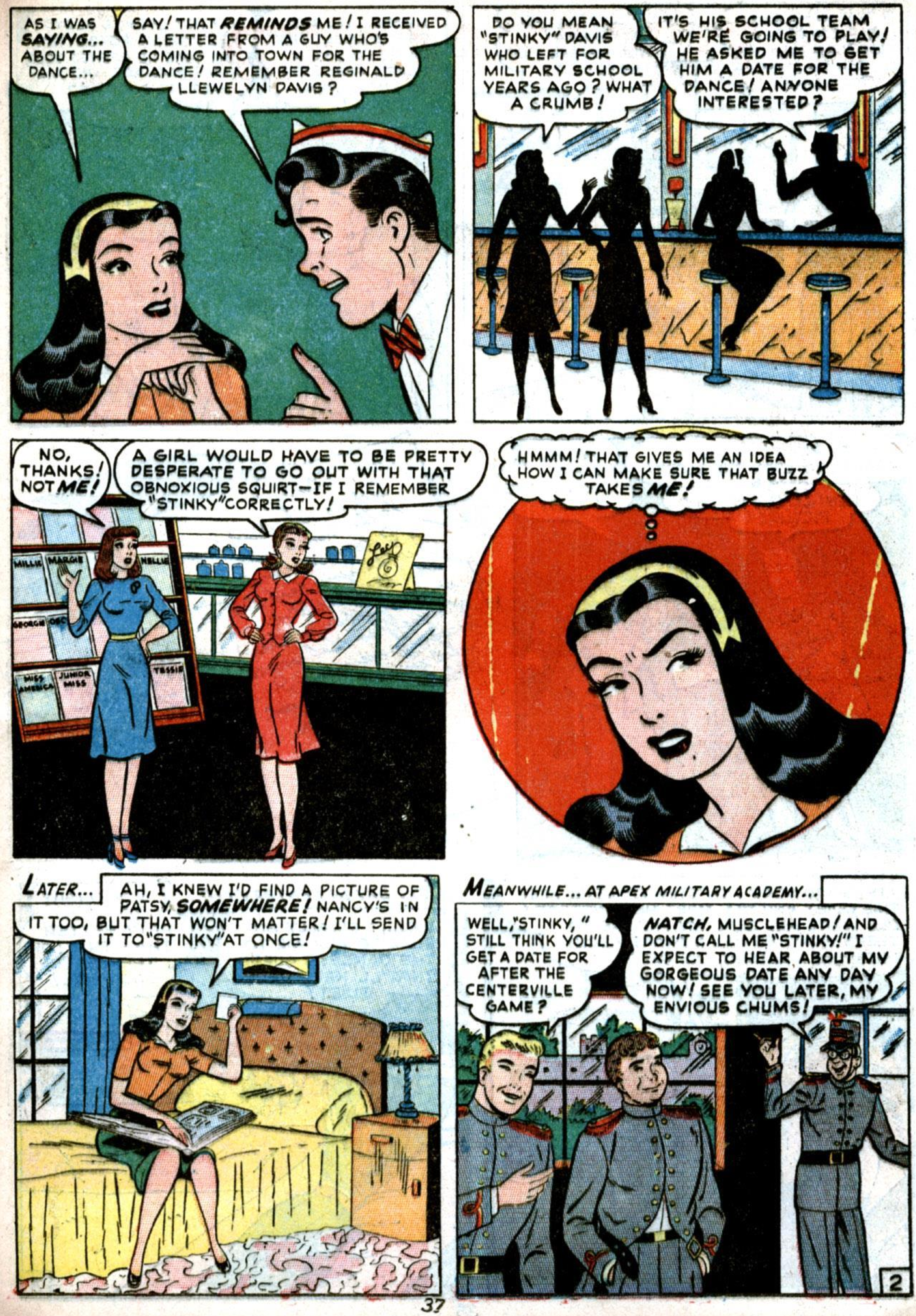
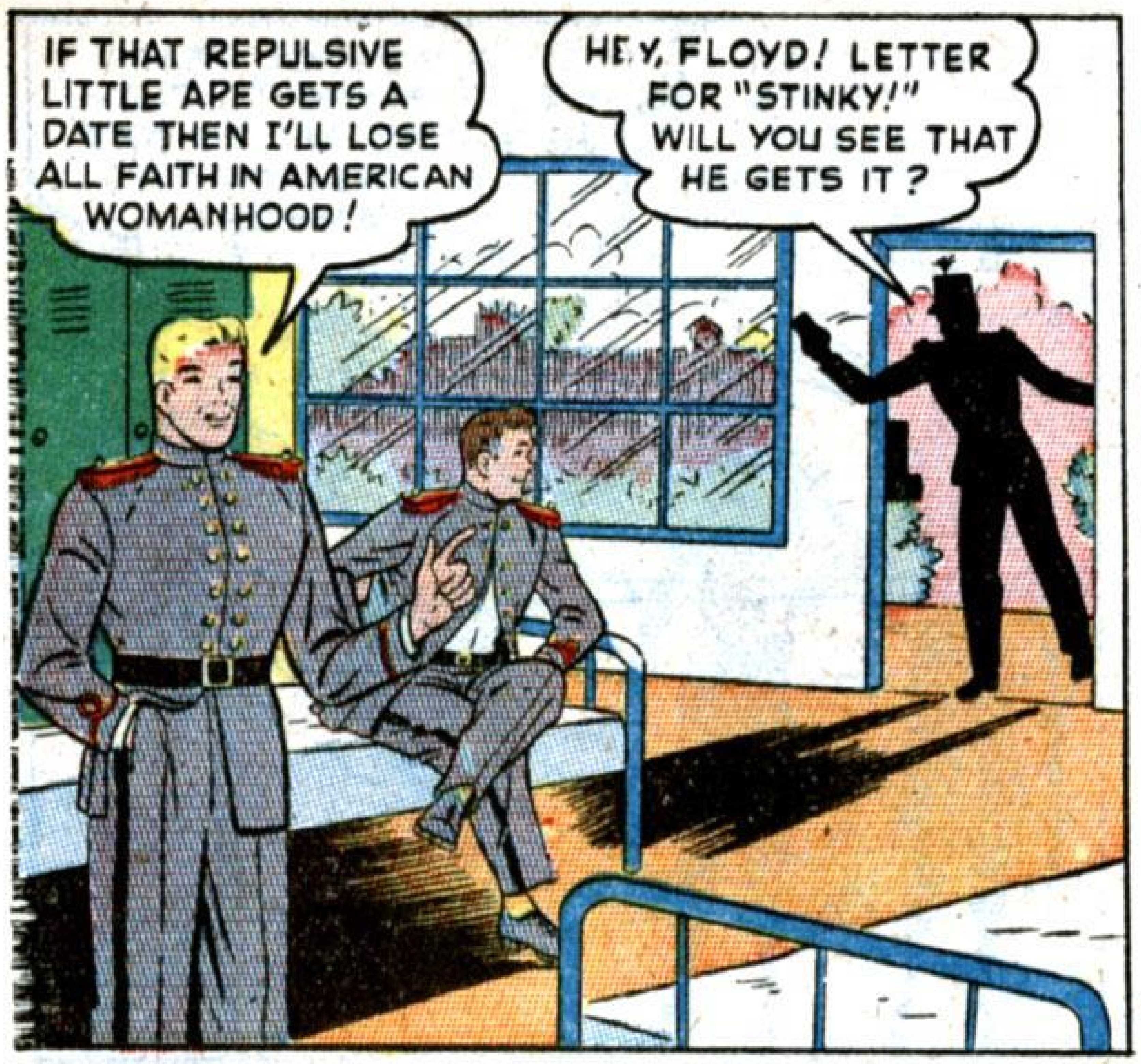
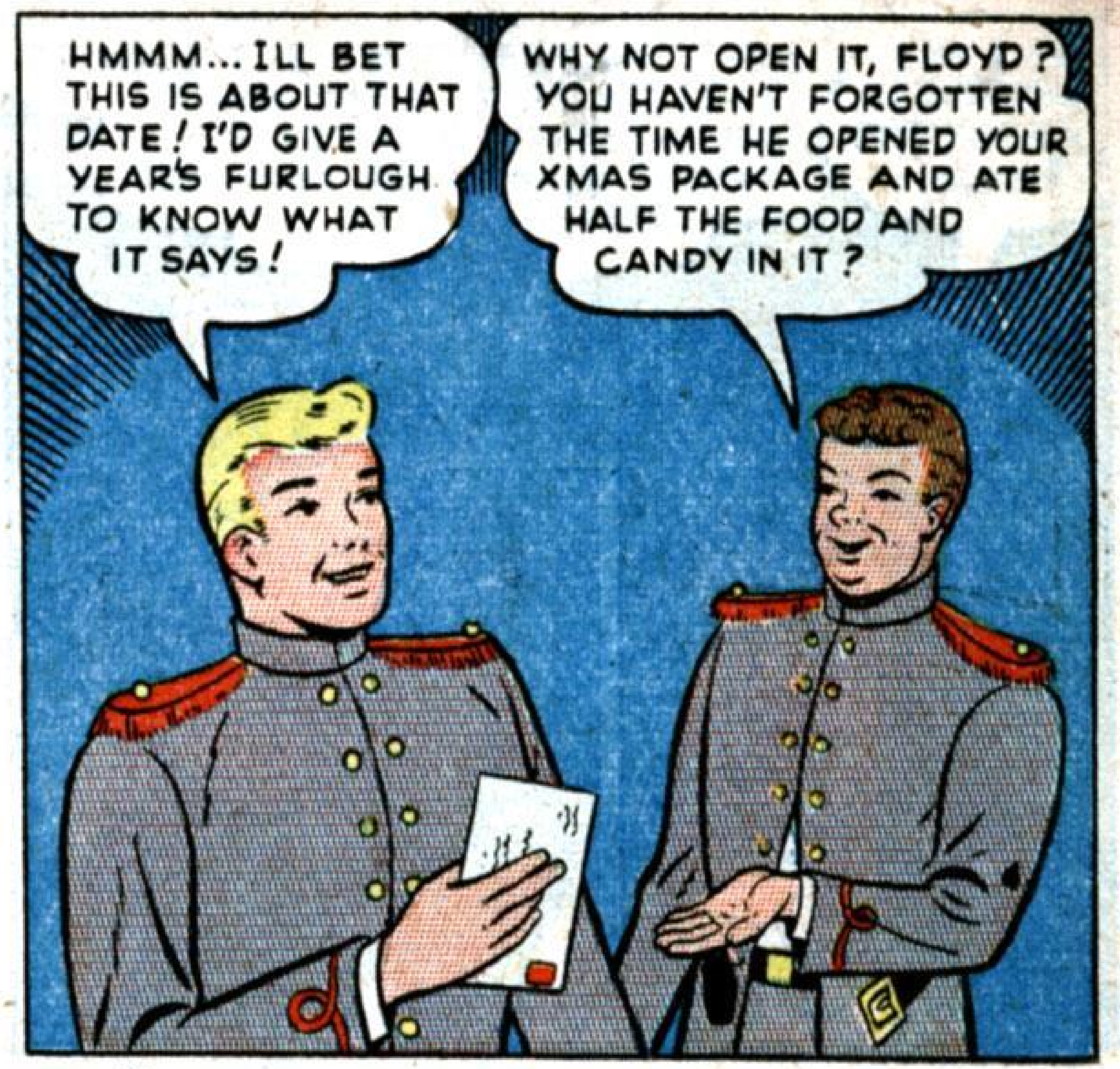
PATSY WALKER

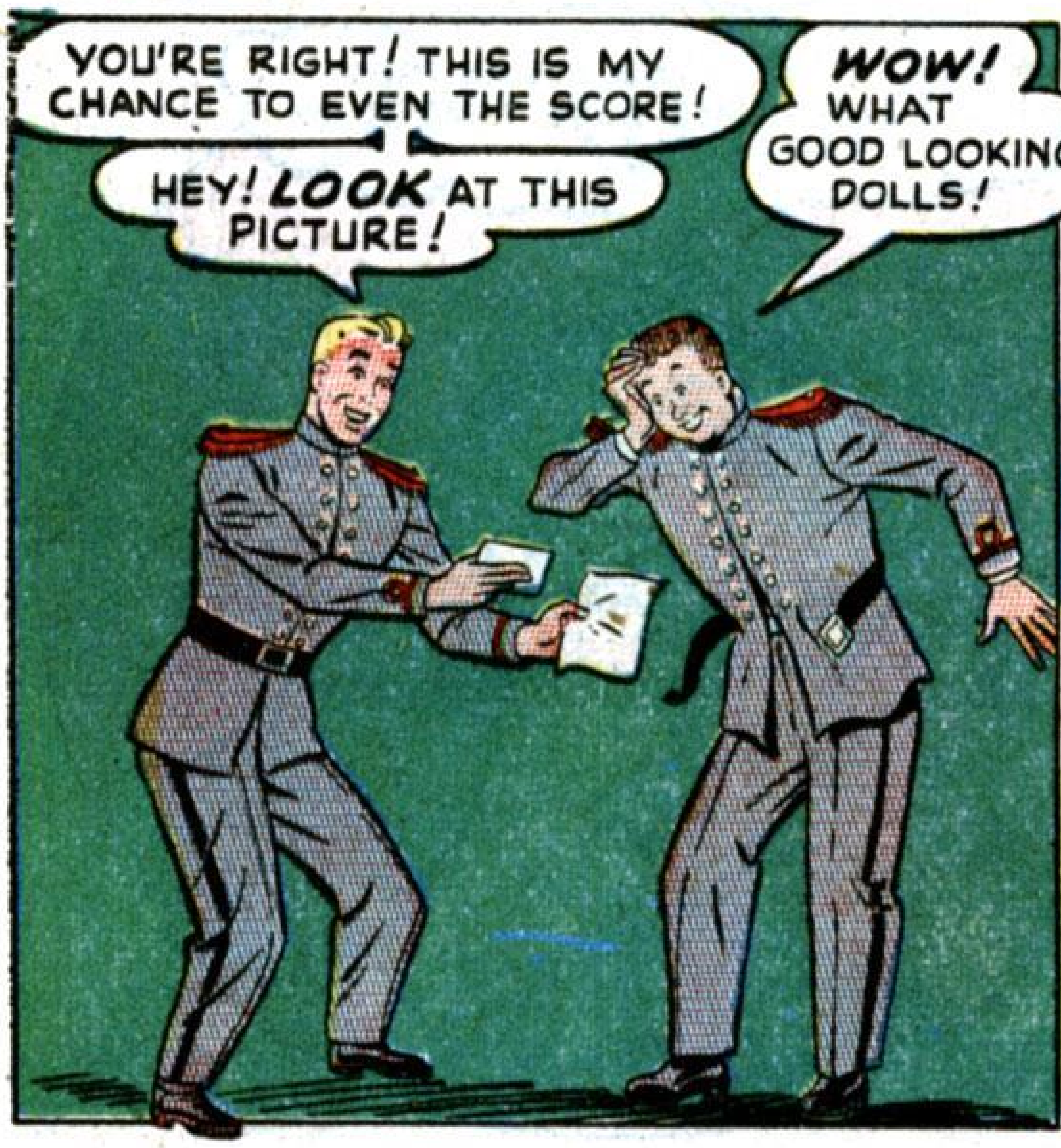
IN "SEEING is BELIEVING!"

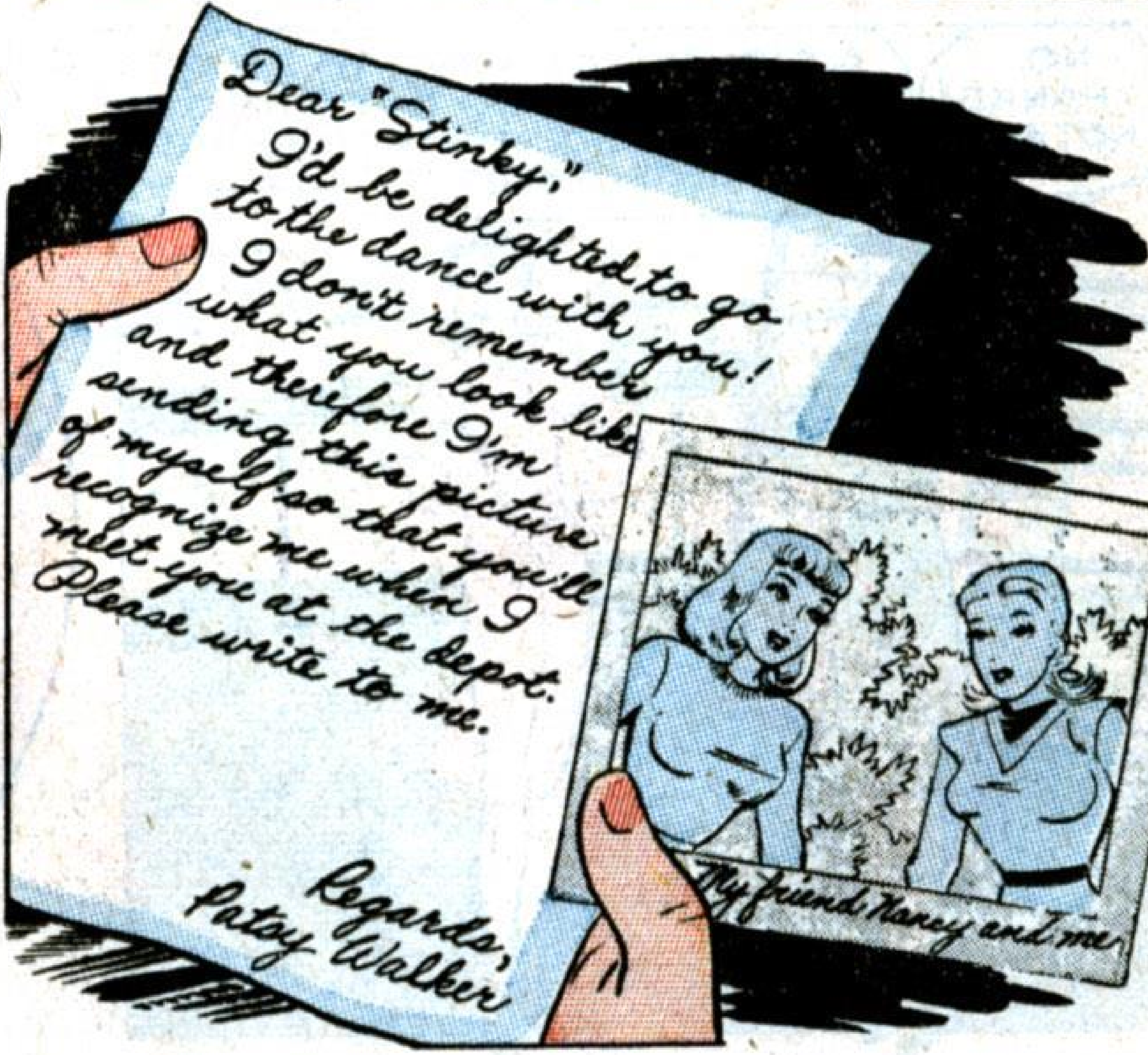

BUZZ IS TAKING *ME* TO THE DANCE! I HOPE YOU'RE NOT *TOO* DISAPPOINTED!
BUZZ? POOH! I'VE GOT A BLIND DATE WITH A REAL *HE-MAN!* MY MAN IS IN *UNIFORM!*
Perfume de Chier
HEDY
2524
LOOK, NANCY! THERE'S HEDY AT WORK ON BUZZ AGAIN!
I'LL BET SHE'S TRYING TO GET HIM TO TAKE HER TO THE "AFTER THE GAME" DANCE NEXT SATURDAY!
HELLO, BUZZ! I HOPE I'M NOT INTERRUPTING ANYTHING...
YOU *ARE!*
OF COURSE NOT, PATSY!
1


AS I WAS SAYING... ABOUT THE DANCE...
SAY! THAT REMINDS ME! I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM A GUY WHO'S COMING INTO TOWN FOR THE DANCE! REMEMBER REGINALD LLEWELYN DAVIS?
DO YOU MEAN "STINKY" DAVIS WHO LEFT FOR MILITARY SCHOOL YEARS AGO? WHAT A CRUMB!
IT'S HIS SCHOOL TEAM WE'RE GOING TO PLAY! HE ASKED ME TO GET HIM A DATE FOR THE DANCE! ANYONE INTERESTED?
NO, THANKS! NOT ME!
A GIRL WOULD HAVE TO BE PRETTY DESPERATE TO GO OUT WITH THAT OBNOXIOUS SQUIRT—IF I REMEMBER "STINKY" CORRECTLY!
MILLIE
MARGIE
NELLIE
GEORGIE
OSC
MISS AMERICA
JUNIOR MISS
TESSIE
HMMM! THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA HOW I CAN MAKE SURE THAT BUZZ TAKES ME!
LATER...
AH, I KNEW I'D FIND A PICTURE OF PATSY, SOMEWHERE! NANCY'S IN IT TOO, BUT THAT WON'T MATTER! I'LL SEND IT TO "STINKY" AT ONCE!
MEANWHILE... AT APEX MILITARY ACADEMY...
WELL, "STINKY," STILL THINK YOU'LL GET A DATE FOR AFTER THE CENTERVILLE GAME?
NATCH, MUSCLEHEAD! AND DON'T CALL ME "STINKY!" I EXPECT TO HEAR ABOUT MY GORGEOUS DATE ANY DAY NOW! SEE YOU LATER, MY ENVIOUS CHUMS!
2


IF THAT REPULSIVE LITTLE APE GETS A DATE THEN I'LL LOSE ALL FAITH IN AMERICAN WOMANHOOD!
HEY, FLOYD! LETTER FOR "STINKY!" WILL YOU SEE THAT HE GETS IT?

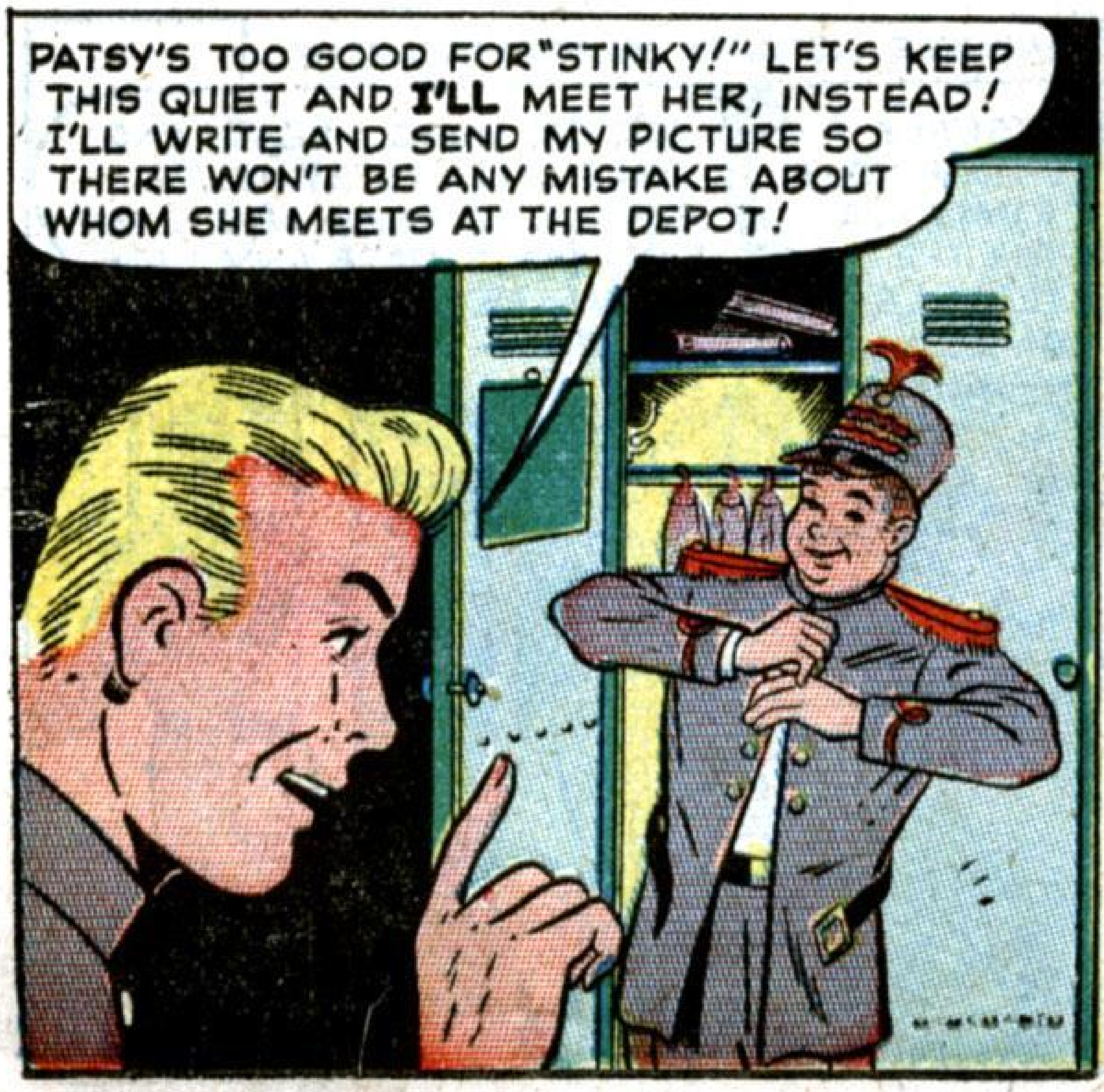

HMMM... ILL BET THIS IS ABOUT THAT DATE! I'D GIVE A YEAR'S FURLOUGH TO KNOW WHAT IT SAYS!
WHY NOT OPEN IT, FLOYD? YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN THE TIME HE OPENED YOUR XMAS PACKAGE AND ATE HALF THE FOOD AND CANDY IN IT?

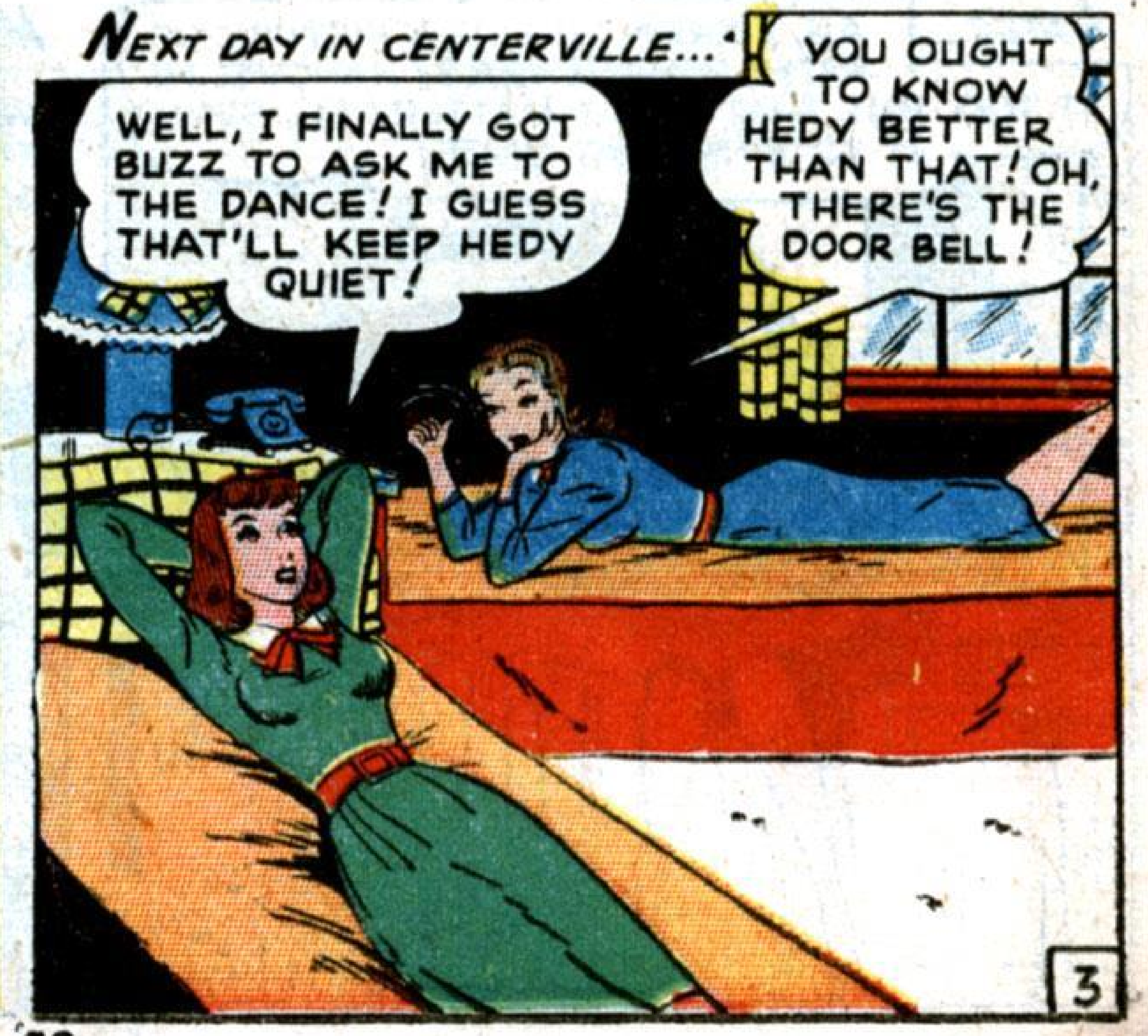

YOU'RE RIGHT! THIS IS MY CHANCE TO EVEN THE SCORE!
HEY! **LOOK** AT THIS PICTURE!
WOW! WHAT GOOD LOOKING DOLLS!

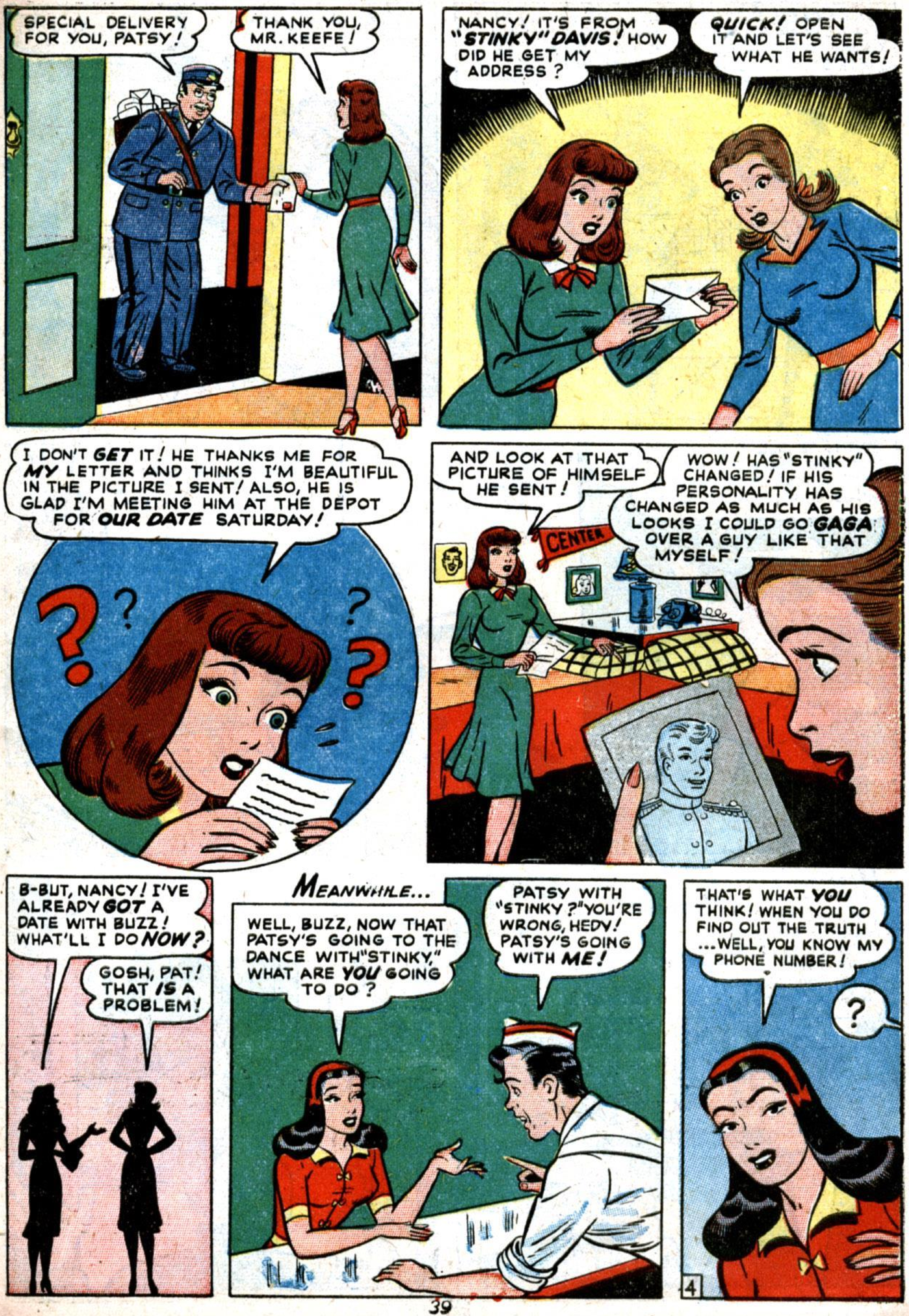

Dear "Stinky,"
I'd be delighted to go to the dance with you! I don't remember what you look like and therefore I'm sending this picture of myself so that you'll recognize me when I meet you at the depot. Please write to me.

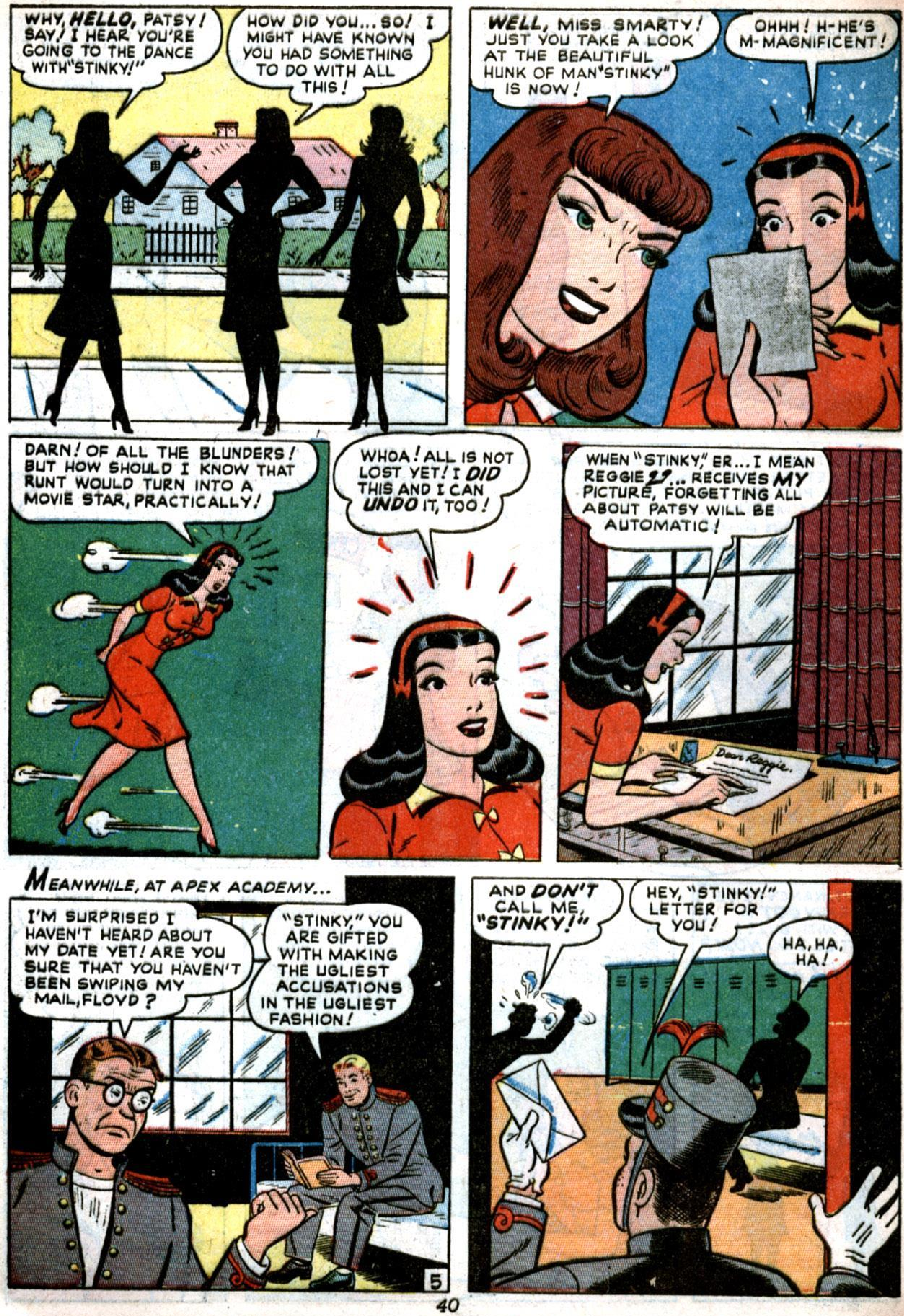
Regards,
Patsy Walker

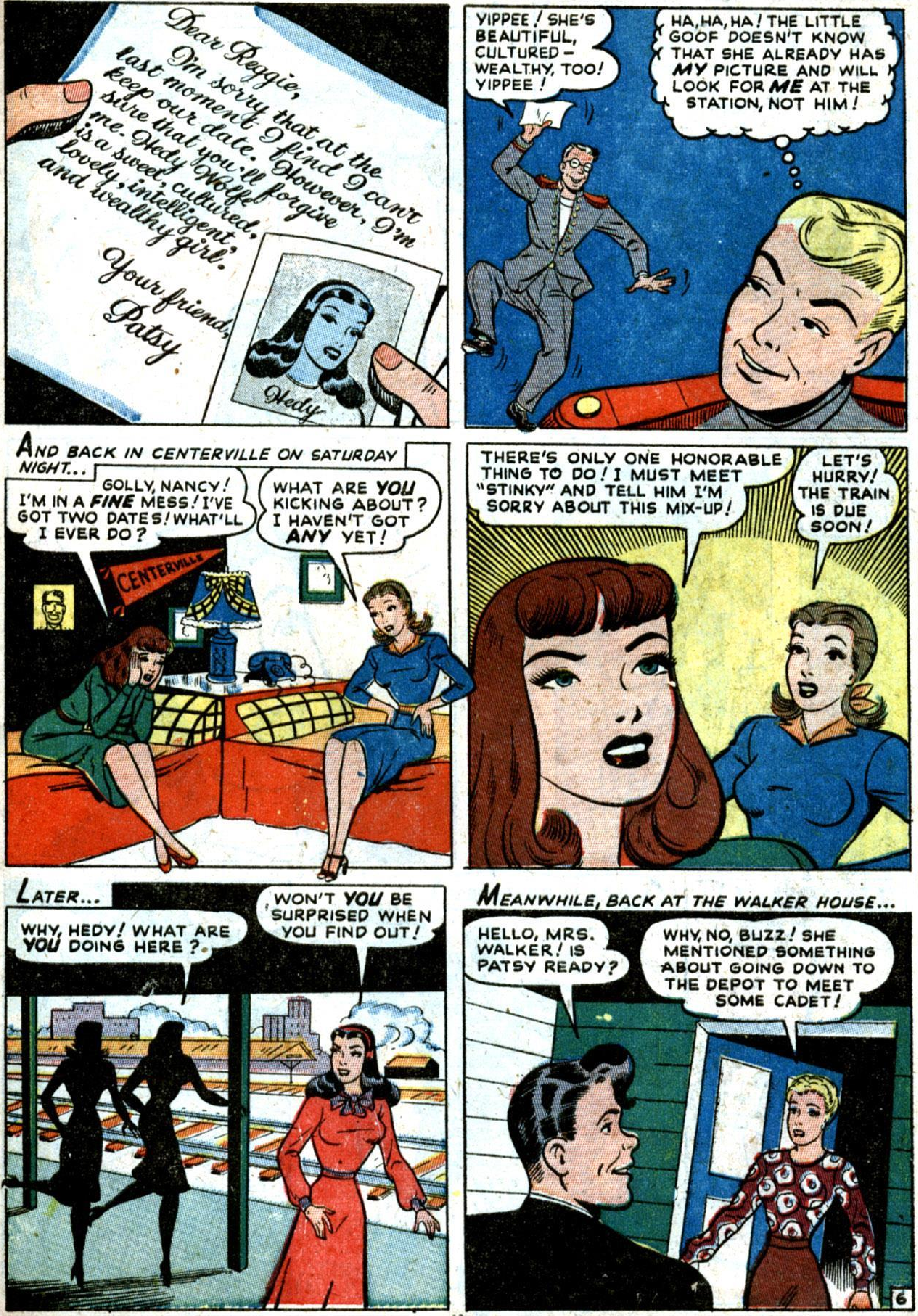
My friend Nancy and me

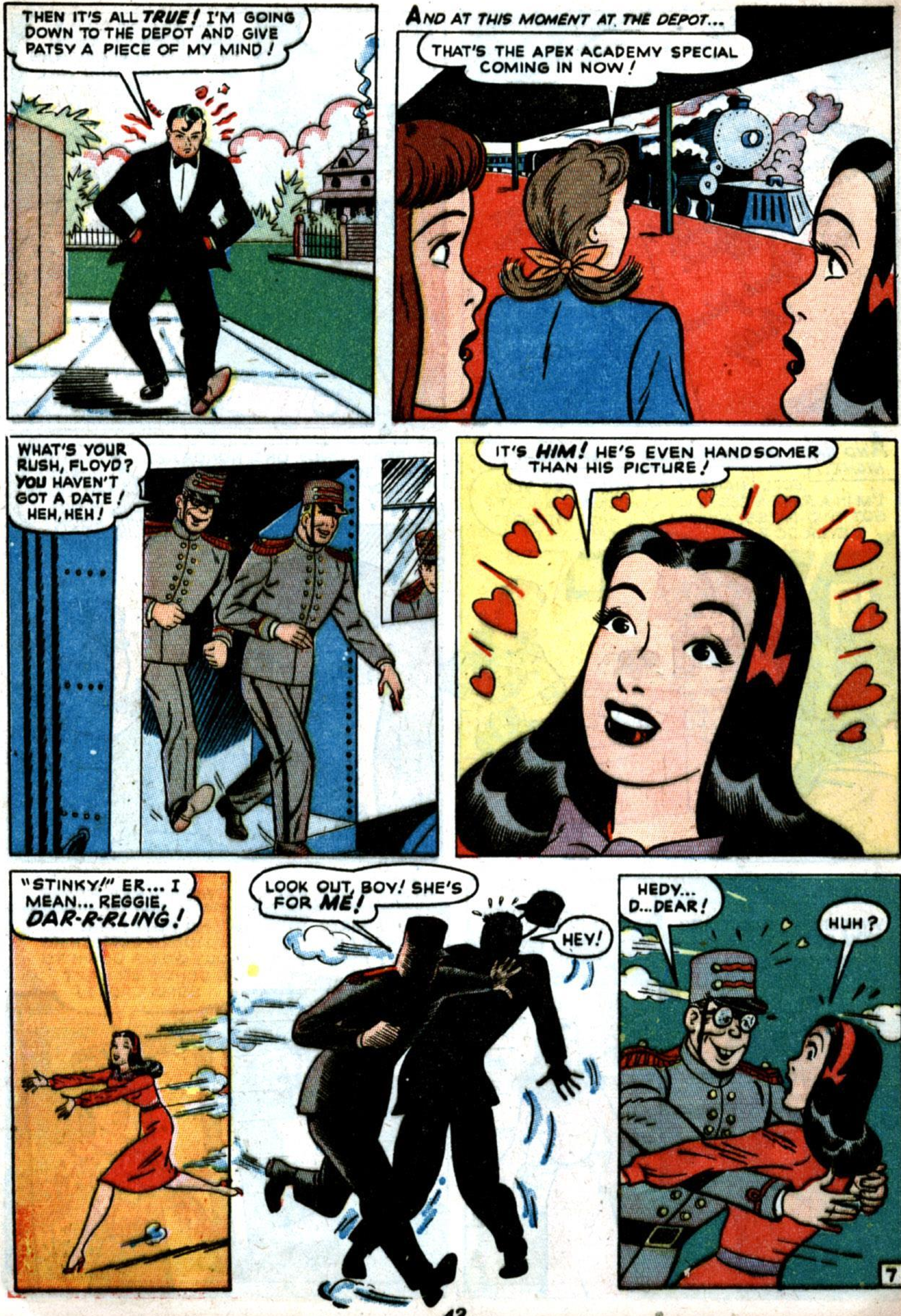

PATSY'S TOO GOOD FOR "STINKY!" LET'S KEEP THIS QUIET AND **I'LL** MEET HER, INSTEAD! I'LL WRITE AND SEND MY PICTURE SO THERE WON'T BE ANY MISTAKE ABOUT WHOM SHE MEETS AT THE DEPOT!

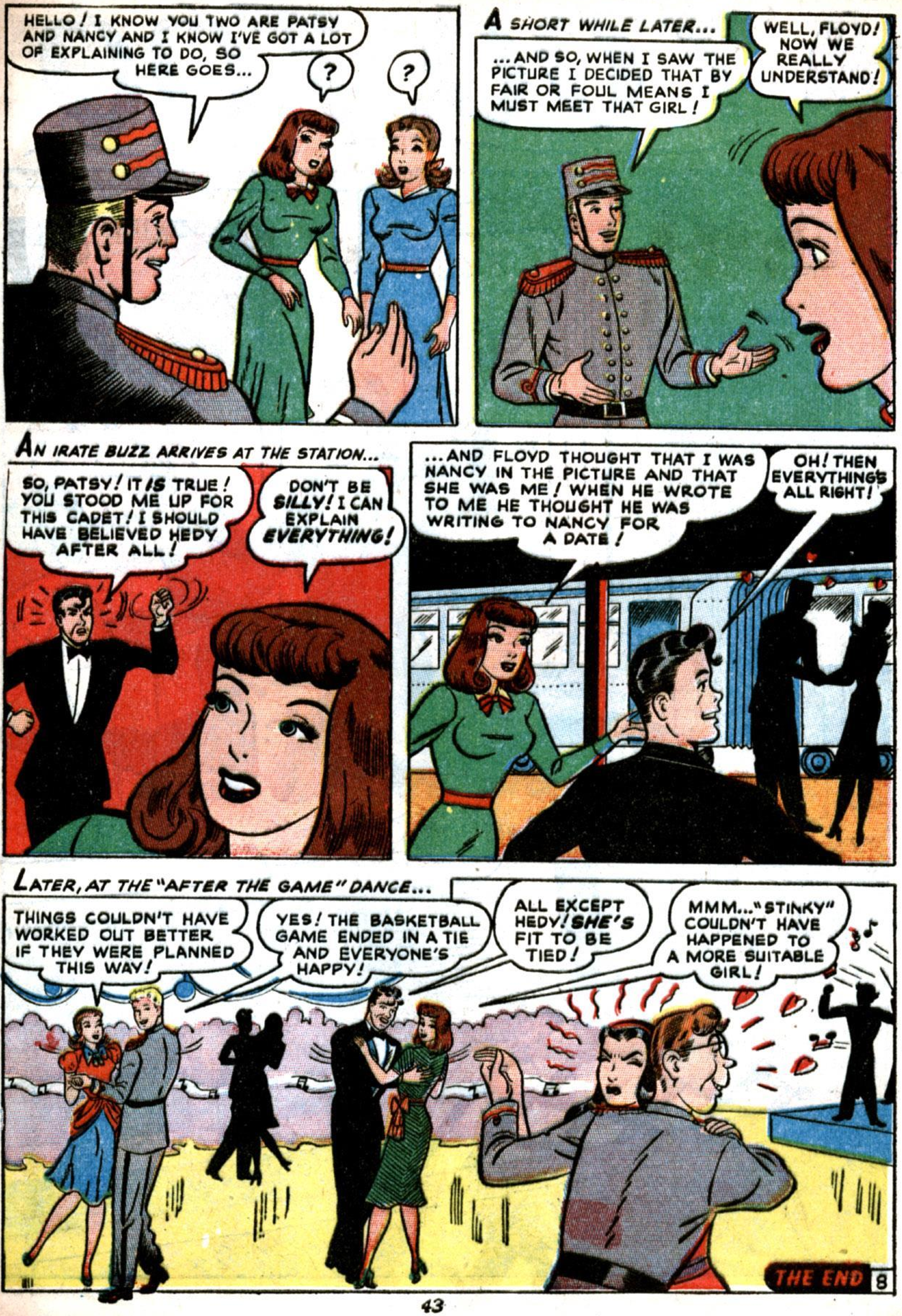

NEXT DAY IN CENTERVILLE...
WELL, I FINALLY GOT BUZZ TO ASK ME TO THE DANCE! I GUESS THAT'LL KEEP HEDY QUIET!
YOU OUGHT TO KNOW HEDY BETTER THAN THAT! OH, THERE'S THE DOOR BELL!


SPECIAL DELIVERY FOR YOU, PATSY!
THANK YOU, MR. KEEFE!
NANCY! IT'S FROM "STINKY" DAVIS! HOW DID HE GET MY ADDRESS?
QUICK! OPEN IT AND LET'S SEE WHAT HE WANTS!
I DON'T GET IT! HE THANKS ME FOR MY LETTER AND THINKS I'M BEAUTIFUL IN THE PICTURE I SENT! ALSO, HE IS GLAD I'M MEETING HIM AT THE DEPOT FOR OUR DATE SATURDAY!
? ? ? ?
AND LOOK AT THAT PICTURE OF HIMSELF HE SENT!
WOW! HAS "STINKY" CHANGED! IF HIS PERSONALITY HAS CHANGED AS MUCH AS HIS LOOKS I COULD GO GAGA OVER A GUY LIKE THAT MYSELF!
CENTER
B-BUT, NANCY! I'VE ALREADY GOT A DATE WITH BUZZ! WHAT'LL I DO NOW?
GOSH, PAT! THAT IS A PROBLEM!
MEANWHILE...
WELL, BUZZ, NOW THAT PATSY'S GOING TO THE DANCE WITH "STINKY," WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
PATSY WITH "STINKY?" YOU'RE WRONG, HEDY! PATSY'S GOING WITH ME!
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK! WHEN YOU DO FIND OUT THE TRUTH ...WELL, YOU KNOW MY PHONE NUMBER!
?
4

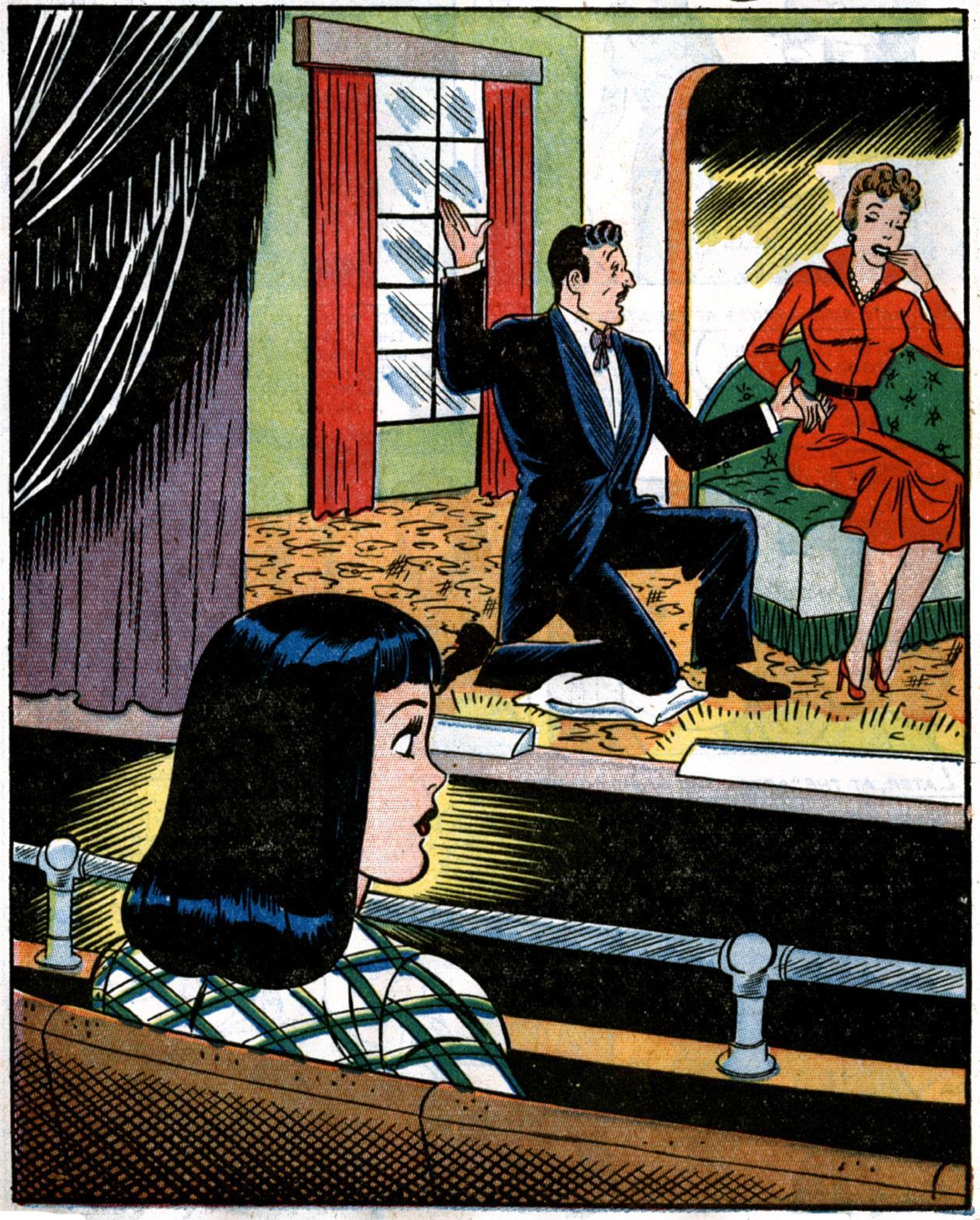

WHY, HELLO, PATSY! SAY! I HEAR YOU'RE GOING TO THE DANCE WITH "STINKY!"
HOW DID YOU... SO! I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN YOU HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH ALL THIS!
WELL, MISS SMARTY! JUST YOU TAKE A LOOK AT THE BEAUTIFUL HUNK OF MAN "STINKY" IS NOW!
OHHH! H-HE'S M-MAGNIFICENT!
DARN! OF ALL THE BLUNDERS! BUT HOW SHOULD I KNOW THAT RUNT WOULD TURN INTO A MOVIE STAR, PRACTICALLY!
WHOA! ALL IS NOT LOST YET! I DID THIS AND I CAN UNDO IT, TOO!
WHEN "STINKY," ER... I MEAN REGGIE"... RECEIVES MY PICTURE, FORGETTING ALL ABOUT PATSY WILL BE AUTOMATIC!
Dear Reggie.
MEANWHILE, AT APEX ACADEMY...
I'M SURPRISED I HAVEN'T HEARD ABOUT MY DATE YET! ARE YOU SURE THAT YOU HAVEN'T BEEN SWIPING MY MAIL, FLOYD?
"STINKY," YOU ARE GIFTED WITH MAKING THE UGLIEST ACCUSATIONS IN THE UGLIEST FASHION!
5
AND DON'T CALL ME, "STINKY!"
HEY, "STINKY!" LETTER FOR YOU!
HA, HA, HA!

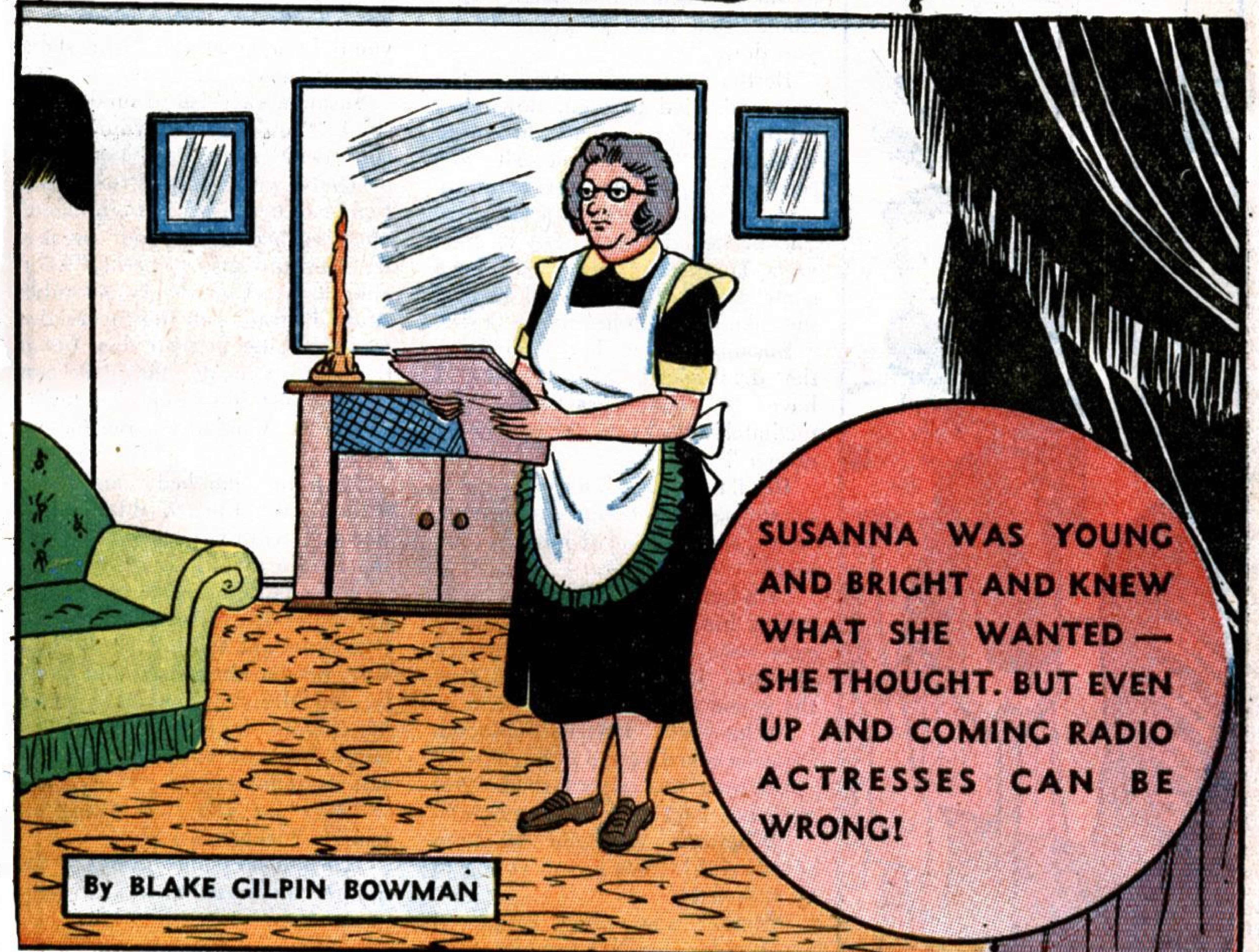

Dear Reggie,
I'm sorry that at the last moment I find I can't keep our date. However, I'm sure that you'll forgive me. Hedy Wolfe is a sweet, cultured, lovely, intelligent, and wealthy girl.
Your friend,
Patsy
Hedy
YIPPEE! SHE'S BEAUTIFUL, CULTURED – WEALTHY, TOO! YIPPEE!
HA, HA, HA! THE LITTLE GOOF DOESN'T KNOW THAT SHE ALREADY HAS MY PICTURE AND WILL LOOK FOR ME AT THE STATION, NOT HIM!
AND BACK IN CENTERVILLE ON SATURDAY NIGHT...
GOLLY, NANCY! I'M IN A FINE MESS! I'VE GOT TWO DATES! WHAT'LL I EVER DO?
WHAT ARE YOU KICKING ABOUT? I HAVEN'T GOT ANY YET!
CENTERVILLE
THERE'S ONLY ONE HONORABLE THING TO DO! I MUST MEET "STINKY" AND TELL HIM I'M SORRY ABOUT THIS MIX-UP!
LET'S HURRY! THE TRAIN IS DUE SOON!
LATER...
WHY, HEDY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
WON'T YOU BE SURPRISED WHEN YOU FIND OUT!
MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE WALKER HOUSE...
HELLO, MRS. WALKER! IS PATSY READY?
WHY, NO, BUZZ! SHE MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT GOING DOWN TO THE DEPOT TO MEET SOME CADET!
6


THEN IT'S ALL *TRUE*! I'M GOING DOWN TO THE DEPOT AND GIVE PATSY A PIECE OF MY MIND!
AND AT THIS MOMENT AT THE DEPOT...
THAT'S THE APEX ACADEMY SPECIAL COMING IN NOW!
WHAT'S YOUR RUSH, FLOYD? **YOU** HAVEN'T GOT A DATE! HEH, HEH!
IT'S ***HIM!*** HE'S EVEN HANDSOMER THAN HIS PICTURE!
"STINKY!" ER... I MEAN... REGGIE, ***DAR-R-RLING!***
LOOK OUT, BOY! SHE'S FOR ***ME!***
HEY!
HEDY... D...DEAR!
HUH?
7


HELLO! I KNOW YOU TWO ARE PATSY AND NANCY AND I KNOW I'VE GOT A LOT OF EXPLAINING TO DO, SO HERE GOES...
?
?
A SHORT WHILE LATER...
...AND SO, WHEN I SAW THE PICTURE I DECIDED THAT BY FAIR OR FOUL MEANS I MUST MEET THAT GIRL!
WELL, FLOYD! NOW WE REALLY UNDERSTAND!
AN IRATE BUZZ ARRIVES AT THE STATION...
SO, PATSY! IT *IS* TRUE! YOU STOOD ME UP FOR THIS CADET! I SHOULD HAVE BELIEVED HEDY AFTER ALL!
DON'T BE *SILLY!* I CAN EXPLAIN *EVERYTHING!*
...AND FLOYD THOUGHT THAT I WAS NANCY IN THE PICTURE AND THAT SHE WAS ME! WHEN HE WROTE TO ME HE THOUGHT HE WAS WRITING TO NANCY FOR A DATE!
OH! THEN EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT!
LATER, AT THE "AFTER THE GAME" DANCE...
THINGS COULDN'T HAVE WORKED OUT BETTER IF THEY WERE PLANNED THIS WAY!
YES! THE BASKETBALL GAME ENDED IN A TIE AND EVERYONE'S HAPPY!
ALL EXCEPT HEDY! *SHE'S* FIT TO BE TIED!
MMM..."STINKY" COULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED TO A MORE SUITABLE GIRL!
THE END
8

TOO, TOO OBVIOUS





SUSANNA WAS YOUNG AND BRIGHT AND KNEW WHAT SHE WANTED—SHE THOUGHT. BUT EVEN UP AND COMING RADIO ACTRESSES CAN BE WRONG!

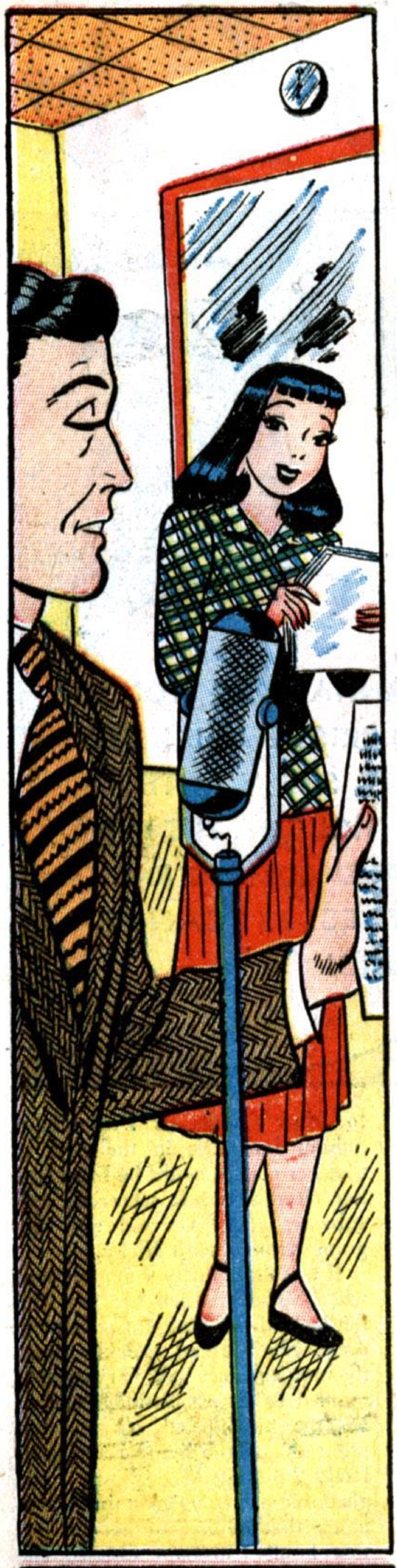
By BLAKE GILPIN BOWMAN

SUSANNA VanSant made sure that her green suede clad feet were neatly together. The straight-backed chairs lined along the stage facing the studio audience demanded a certain primness of posture. Susanna wasn't too concerned about the audience; she was accustomed to their rapt attention after fifteen weeks of acting on the Bentley Family radio show. But she *did* think it was terribly important to look her best before Ricky Durant.

She glanced at Ricky. He stood before the mike—tall, dark, perfect profile, with all the handsomeness required of a matinee idol. Susanna mentally thanked the script authors for writing in the part of the doctor, the role Ricky had portrayed for the last few weeks. Otherwise she might never have met him, might never have had these weeks of tea, dinner and dancing dates.

Out of the corner of one eye she became conscious of frantic motions. Behind the glass partition of the control booth the show's director wig-wagged wildly. Susanna jumped to the mike. Once more she became the daughter of the Bentley family—a high school girl who lived in a suburban home, whose boy friends drove jalopies, who traveled about on a bike and who was forever involving friends and family in frightful predicaments. A girl completely foreign to the real Susanna, who lived in a New York apartment and went to Miss Chatham's Professional School for Girls in the Arts so that her classes could be fitted into her acting schedule, who rode only subways and taxis and who was going around with Ricky.

It was three-thirty that afternoon when Susanna fitted her key into the lock of the VanSant apartment door. She walked quickly down the long entrance hall, her footsteps muffled to almost complete silence by the thick-piled carpet. She glanced into the living room. Perfectly plumped cushions and gleaming ash trays gave mute testimony that neither of her parents was home. Susanna crossed the dining room and nudged open the swinging door. She smiled at the sight of Bertha perched on the



She glanced at Ricky. He stood before the mike—tall, dark, perfect profile.

chrome kitchen stool, her white uniform mushrooming out over the cushion.

Bertha grinned over her shoulder at Susanna. "What's so funny?" she asked.

"Some day," Susanna answered as she climbed onto a neighboring stool, "that stool is going to let you down."

Bertha squirmed around on the seat and tried to yank down her uniform so it would fit more smoothly. "That's not all me, Susie. It's just the starch in my uniform that makes it look . . ." She broke off her protest as Susanna laughed at her. "Oh, have some cake." She gestured toward the cake box with her paring knife.

Susanna rested her elbows on the drainboard. "No, thanks. I have to dress practically immediately. Ricky is taking me to dinner."

Bertha pared a long curlicue of potato peel before she commented. "Been seeing a lot of him, haven't you?"

"Uh-huh. And I'm going to be seeing him lots more." Susanna's eyes were dreamy. "Mrs. Richard Durant," she murmured, savoring the sound of the name.

"Wha—at!" Bertha exploded. "Has he asked you to marry him?"

Susanna was unperturbed. "Not yet—but isn't it a lovely name?"

"Whatever are you thinking about, child? You're too young to be married!"

"Mother was only a couple of years older than I when she married," Susanna interrupted.

"But Ricky's twice your age!"

"Oh, Bertha, don't be archaic. What does that matter? It would be an honor to be the wife of such a great actor."

"*Actor*!" Bertha snorted, and jabbed her paring knife belligerently into a potato. "How your parents' daughter can even use that word in reference to that collar ad!" She glared at Susanna who started to protest and shouted, "And don't give me that 'you're speaking of the man I love' routine."

Susanna looked hurt. "I wouldn't be so corny," she mumbled.

Bertha rushed on. "Why, it's an insult to your parents to call him an actor. When I first came to work for Miss Rita and Mr. Ronald, all Broadway was at their feet. Then when you were born Miss Rita wanted to stay home with you rather than continue her career, and without her, Mr. Ronald decided to try producing instead of acting." Bertha eyed Susanna critically. "If you ever get to be a tenth as good as they were, you'll be a great star," she stated emphatically.

Susanna swiveled around on the stool. "You're letting your loyalty run away with you. You know perfectly well Mother titters and Father orates. They're both hams." She reached over and tweaked Bertha's quivering cheek. "Adorable hams. Completely adorable. And I'll grant you that overacting was the thing in their day, but in the modern theater they'd be considered just too—too *obvious*."

"Susie VanSant!" Bertha exploded.

Susanna laughed and fled through the kitchen door before Bertha's wrath like a leaf scurrying before the wind.

When Susanna came home from her date, she found Bertha and Rita VanSant talking in the hallway. Bertha jumped around quickly, and Mrs. VanSant gave one of her famous tinkling little laughs, a laugh Susanna catalogued to herself as plain giggle.

"Why are you two hiding out here?" Susanna asked.

"Oh, discussing things," her mother answered airily. "Have a good time?"

"Divine," Susanna answered and went into the living room. Her father was stretched out in a deep lounge chair, a collection of scripts on his lap. Susanna bent and kissed him.

"Good evening, my little black-eyed Susan." He looked up at her with a teasing smile. "If you returned to our midst to do your homework, I suggest you wipe the stardust out of your eyes first."

Susanna laughed happily as she went to her room.

Laughter was a part of Susanna these days. Ricky said her gaiety was one of her most charming characteristics, and she didn't have to force the role. Since Ricky had begun to rush her, she just couldn't take anything seriously—except Ricky, of course. She wasn't exactly going around in a trance, she told herself—she was just deliriously happy.

Two days later Susanna was humming as she let herself into the apartment and started down the hall. She stopped abruptly. Something was off key. She paused and tried to place what was wrong—then as she walked on again, she realized what it was. Her heels tapped loudly on bare floor—the carpet was gone.

The living room presented a spectacle of confusion. Books teetered in piles. Pillows were rumpled and ash trays filled to overflowing. Her father was on his knees in the corner sorting play manuscripts. Her mother, a smudge of dust on her nose and her hair wispy, stood indecisively in the middle of the room.

"What gives?" Susanna exclaimed. "Can three play?"

Her mother and father exchanged significant looks. Her mother waved her hands helplessly, and her father cleared his throat. "Perhaps you better break the news, my dear," he said to his wife.

"Oh, no, darling, you tell her." Mrs. VanSant plumped herself down on a hassock.

"I have a nickel. Want to toss it?" Susanna suggested.

"It would be better for you to save it, my child. You may well need it." Susanna questioned him with her eyebrows. "'Into each life some rain must fall.' Longfellow, my dear."

"Uh-huh—and that has something to do with us?"

"Yes, little Susanna. This is the proverbial rainy day. We are, in a word, broke."

For a moment the import of what he had said failed to reach her, and when it did, all she could do was echo, "Broke?—you mean, er, broke?"

"Flat." Her father sat down, his shoulders slouched.

Mrs. VanSant's eyes were misty. She said simply, "I'm sorry, Susanna."

Susanna put her arm around her mother's shoulders. "Don't be ridiculous, Mother. We'll work it out, but why didn't you tell me before now?"

Mrs. VanSant's voice cracked slightly. "We kept hoping things would change, but time's up now."

"Our paid up lease runs out on the first, and the management is not enticed by the idea of keeping us on as guests of the establishment."

"We're moving," Susanna said blankly. "Where, Father?"

"A little place on 114th Street. Maybe later we can find a place out of the city. You've never learned to play tennis or kept a garden, have you?"

Susanna's eyes clouded. Poor dear, she thought, he's trying to make this sound like fun. "It'll all be a great adventure," she said out loud.

"And you've never learned to cook," Mrs. VanSant added. "Come, Susanna. This is a fine time to learn."

"You mean Bertha's not here?"

Her parents shook their heads.

"Why didn't she say good-by? She must have felt too badly. But cheer up. We always have my salary. The Bentley Family can support us."

Her father lighted his pipe, avoiding her eyes. "You'll need all that to stay in Miss Chatham's. Unless you'd consider changing. There's another professional school—coeducational and only straight scholastic work, no modern dramatics, but it's a great deal less expensive." He glanced at her obliquely. "We could help you with your dramatic studies."

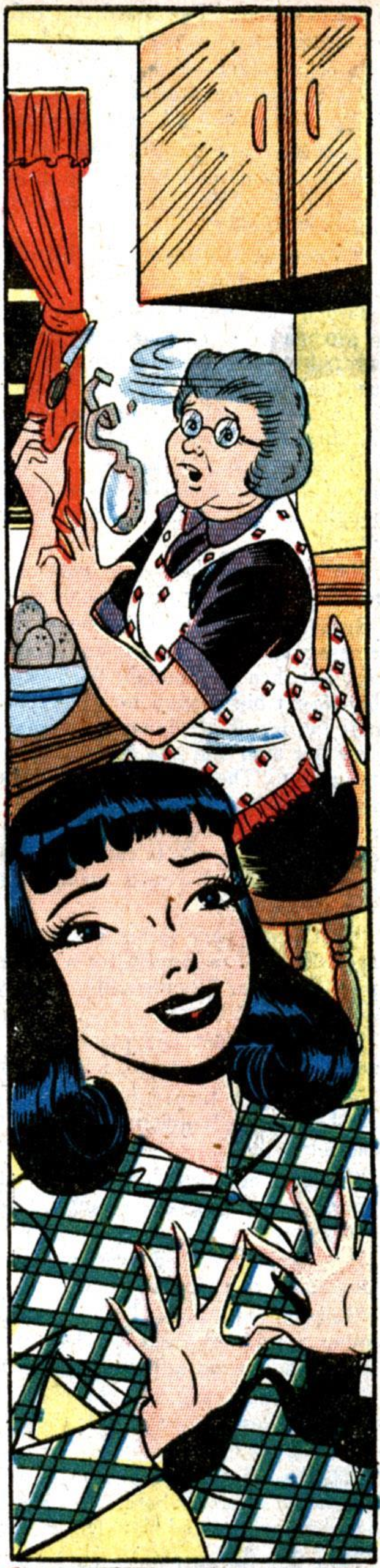
Susanna gave mental thanks that they had no notion of her low opinion of their acting abilities. It would hurt them terribly. "Of course, I'll change," she said. "It's an utterly simple solution." The doorbell rang. She broke away from her parents. "That will be Rickey."

Ricky's suaveness was a trifle shattered by the shambles of the room. Susanna laughed at his startled expression. "A mess, isn't it?" she chortled. "The VanSants are about to try a new way of life, outside the gilded cage. Father says the landlord does not react kindly to non-paying tenants."

"You mean y-you can't pay the rent," Ricky stammered.

"That doesn't mean you can't sit down right now. We still live here for the moment." Mrs. VanSant smiled graciously and gestured Ricky toward her prized possession, a lovely Queen Anne settee.

Ricky remained standing. "But I don't understand, sir," he said



"Mrs. Richard Durant," she murmured, savoring the sound of the name.

to Mr. VanSant. "I've heard you retired with one of the largest fortunes ever amassed on Broadway."

"Stocks—plays—perhaps I have not chosen wisely." Mr. VanSant touched the tips of his fingers to his lips and wafted a kiss away expressively.

He *is* hurt, thought Susanna. She felt a great sympathy for her parents welling up in her. Suddenly she said to Ricky, "I'd better not go out tonight, Ricky. You understand?"

"Of course," he answered. "I'll call you," he said, mumbled good-byes and left.

Two weeks later Susanna was setting the table in the kitchen of the semi-barren apartment. Her mother puttered at the stove, and her father was making eloquent remarks about the poor quality of the steel in the knife with which he was carving a roast. At first the kitchen had seemed forlorn and empty without the boisterous Bertha, but now Susanna grinned happily at the cosy congeniality of the scene. Then she thought of something. "Where's the Queen Anne settee?"

Her mother shifted some pots around before she answered. "It's gone, dear. Shall we eat now?"

Susanna started to ask whether it was absolutely necessary to sell it, like the carpet and the big square sofa, but then she thought the new apartment probably wasn't big enough for everything anyway. Why spoil the mood of dinner with remorse? She could carry her end, and she could take a hint to change the subject. "There's a boy in my class at school who says it doesn't take any time to get up to 114th Street on the subway," she chattered as they sat down. "Do you mind if he comes to call? He says there are some good public tennis courts up there and he'd like to teach me to play."

"Delightful," her father answered. He opened his paper. He read to himself for a moment, then looked up at Susanna. "Incidentally, have you seen Ricky lately?"

Susanna studied her plate. "The doctor episode ended about ten days ago. I haven't seen him since."

Mr. VanSant turned back to his paper. "It says here he is most frequently seen with the young Vincent heiress."

"Perhaps he has us confused—you know, Vincent heiress, VanSant heiress. There's a certain similarity—only I'm an ex."

Her mother reached over and grasped her hand. "Oh, Susie, don't be bitter!"

"But I'm not, Mother." She was surprised that her mother would even suspect her of bitterness. "It's nice to know what attracted him to me."

The doorbell rang, and Susanna answered it. Two men in uniforms stood outside the doorway, carrying a long round bundle.

"Shall we put the carpet down, Miss?" one asked. "Oh, hello, Mrs. VanSant," he called over Susanna's shoulder as she stared blankly. "We've got the carpet."

"Oh, yes, the carpet." Mrs. VanSant tittered.

"We'll have the sofa tomorrow, but the Queen Anne won't be ready 'til next week. Needed all new webbing."

Susanna studied their uniforms. The words embroidered over their pockets stopped dancing and spelled out "Atlas Cleaners." She turned and fled past her parents to her room. She slammed the door and leaned against it as indignation soared through her. They made a fool of me, she thought. We aren't really broke. They lied to me. Angry tears rushed to her eyes. She groped blindly toward her dressing table for a handkerchief. Ricky's picture brought her up short.

She stood still before the photograph a full minute—then carefully took it from its frame, tore it into little pieces and dropped them into the wastebasket. She dabbed at the moist streaks on her cheeks and went back into the hall.

Her parents stood meekly where she had left them. They seemed to come to life again as they saw her smile. "You didn't really lie to me, did you?" she asked quietly.

The stricken look left her father's face. "Not really, my dear. We just tried to tell you something in the best way we knew how—by acting it out." He put his arm around her tentatively. "If we'd come right out and told you that Ricky was a no-good fortune hunter and you'd find boys your own age interesting, you would have been indignant, but I doubt that you'd have been impressed, right?"

Susanna hugged him. "I guess that's true," she admitted. "Did you send Bertha to the cleaners, too?"

"No, just on vacation. Incidentally, this was her idea."

"Then I want to see her. I want to thank her and tell her obviously everything isn't as obvious as it seems and some things that seem obvious aren't obvious at all," Susan cried.

"It's gone to her head," Mr. VanSant confided to his wife. "Are you making sense?" he asked Susanna.

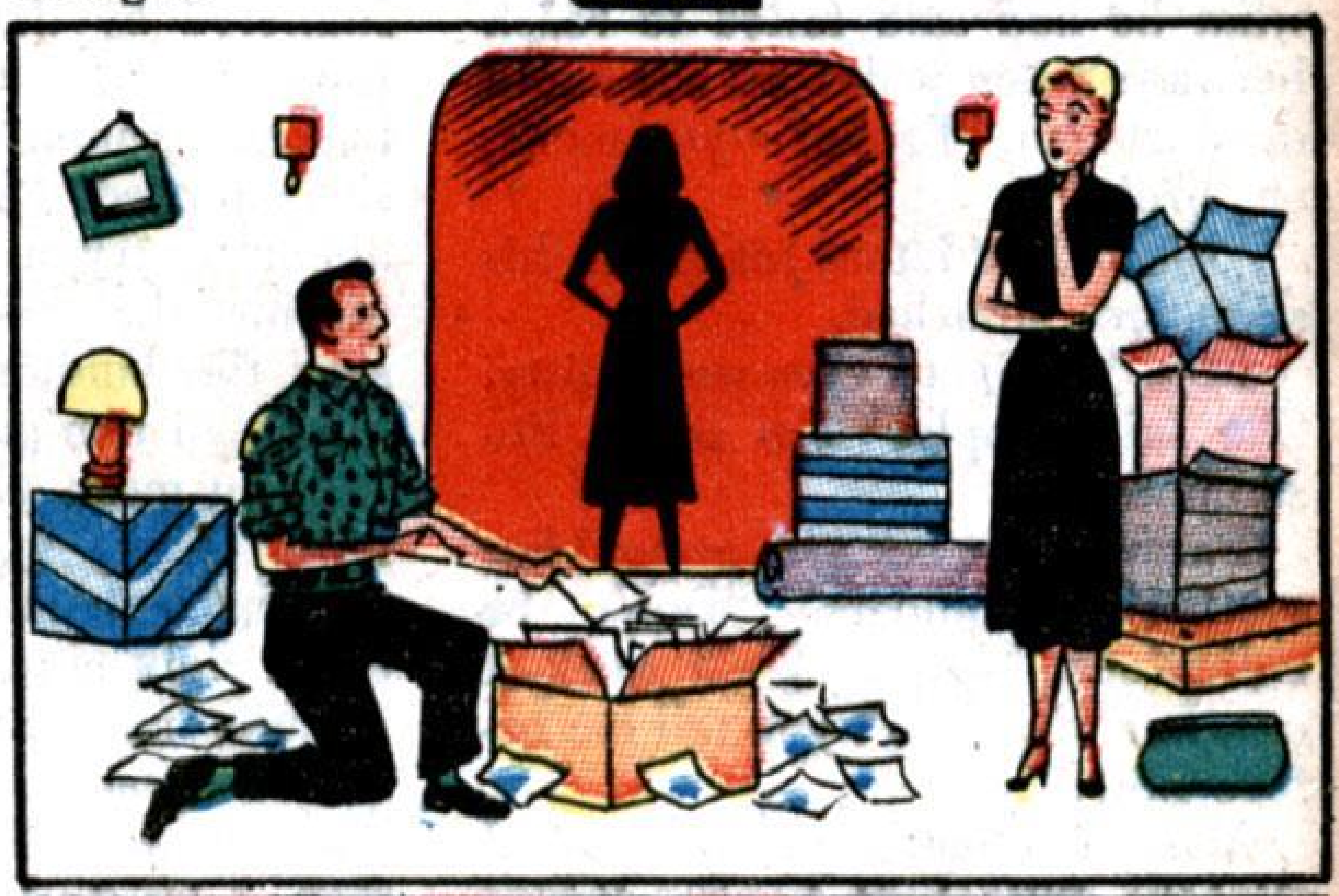
"Beautiful sense, darlings, thank you."

"Speaking of thanks, I have to thank Ricky," Mrs. VanSant said.

"Whatever for?" Susanna asked.

"For inspiring the most thorough housecleaning this household has ever known." Mrs. VanSant laughed gayly—with a very musical quality, Susanna thought.

THE END



"What gives?" Susanna exclaimed. "Can three play?"

FOOD FOR FUN

MUSHROOM MUST . . .

For luncheon, or even a brunch party, how about big mushroom caps stuffed with shrimp and a luscious sauce?

Get the largest mushroom caps you can find—say 6 of them. Brush them and broil them on a buttered broiler rack, exposing top side first. After five minutes, turn the mushrooms and pop a bit of butter inside each cap. Broil four minutes more.

In a saucepan make a sauce by blending 3 tablespoons of olive oil or butter with 4 tablespoons flour and adding, when it bubbles, 2 cups fish stock or clam broth, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil,. then lower heat and simmer for five minutes. Add 1 cup chopped cooked shrimp and let heat through together. Fill the mushroom caps with the mixture, rounding well on top. Arrange the caps on rounds of sauteed bread and pour any remaining sauce over all. Serve very hot.

CABBAGE CINCH . . .

Add a dramatic touch to that extra-special dinner dish with this recipe for SPICED RED CABBAGE.

Bring 3 quarts of water to the boiling point, and drop in a bag of spices—cloves, allspice, a bay leaf, etc. Shred a medium-sized head of red cabbage as finely as possible, and add it to the kettle. Cook gently for half an hour, and then drain well.

Dissolve 3 tablespoons brown sugar in 4 tablespoons of vinegar, and pour over hot cabbage, adding a little salt and 3 tablespoons of butter.

And you'll "love that vegetable"!

HASH HEAVEN . . .

Here's another leftover luxury that will prove you're up on what's cooking.

For corned beef hash, chop a cupful of cooked corned beef, 3 cups boiled potatoes, a cup of cooked beets and half an onion —all should be chopped separately, and then combined. A tablespoon or so of butter is heated in an iron skillet, and the hash mixture spread smoothly over the bottom. If the mixture seems too dry, a little cream may be added. Let the hash brown slowly, and when crisp on the bottom, fold over as you would an omelet. Freshly grated Horseradish mixed with some whipped cream makes a tasty sauce for the hash—although when properly made, it really needs no additional flavor.

It's a simple, inexpensive dish —though it tastes like heaven when made properly.

STEAK SIMPLICITY . . .

Want to impress? Try a steak sandwich. Sounds simple—but a good one is as hard to make as the fanciest dish.

Buy one inch thick steaks—remember, they shrink a bit during cooking—and broil them by putting them under the broiler, or over charcoal, or searing them in a blazing hot iron pan, and then cooking until just pink inside. Spread them with softened butter into which has been worked a goodly quantity of chives, finely minced. If no chives are available, substitute minced watercress.

If you have bought small enough steaks, you can use one per person, and serve them between buttered slices of bread, or atop well buttered English muffins. If a large steak has been your choice, cut it in slices to fit the bread or muffin. Spread the bread or muffin with mustard if you like.

Ideal for a quick supper!

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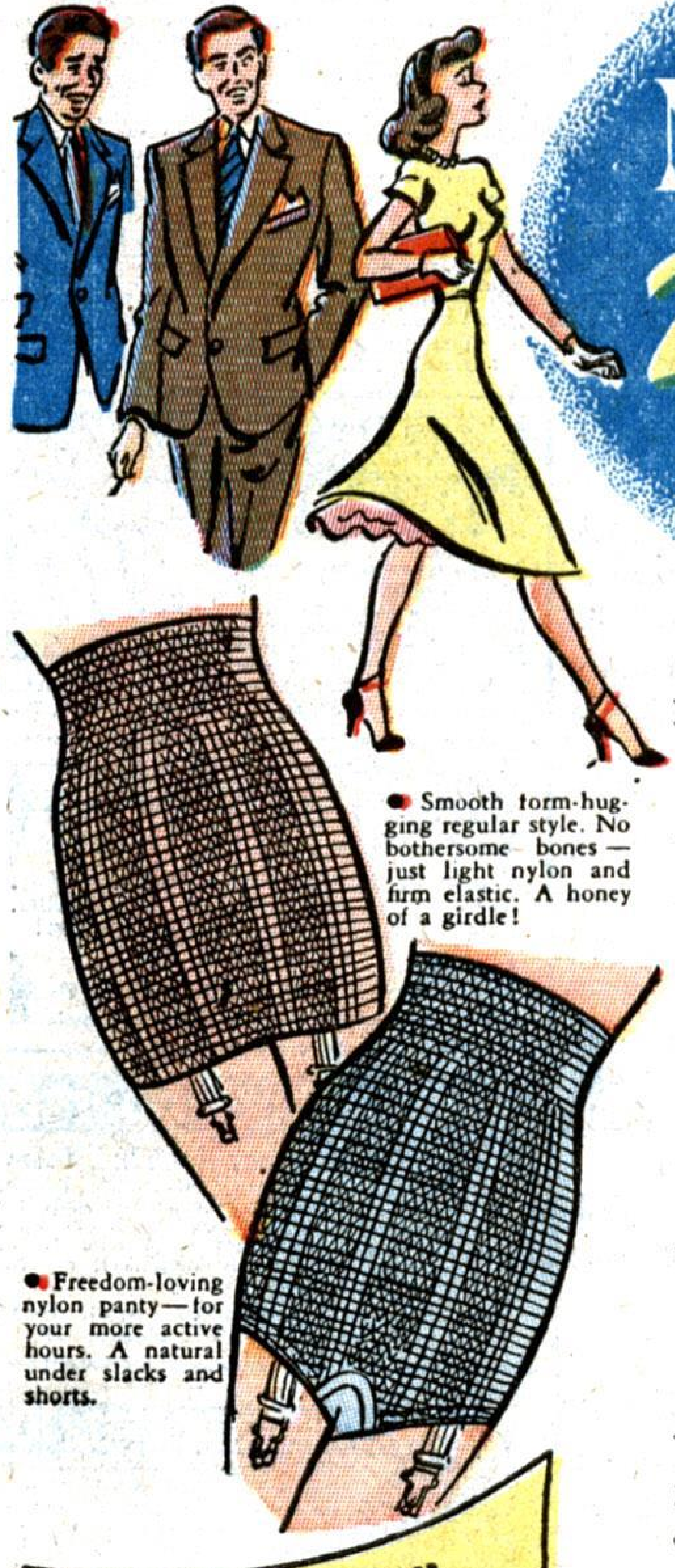

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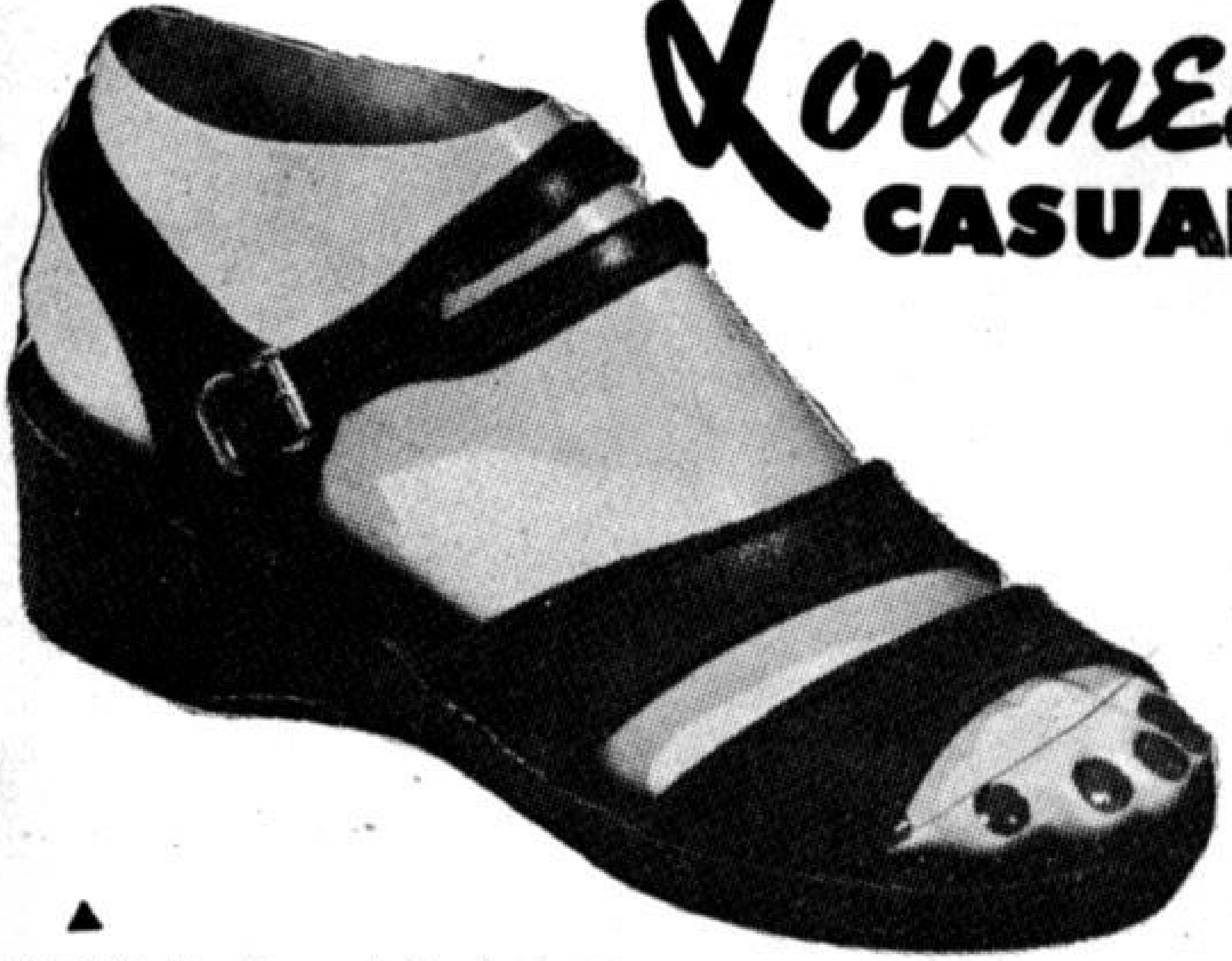

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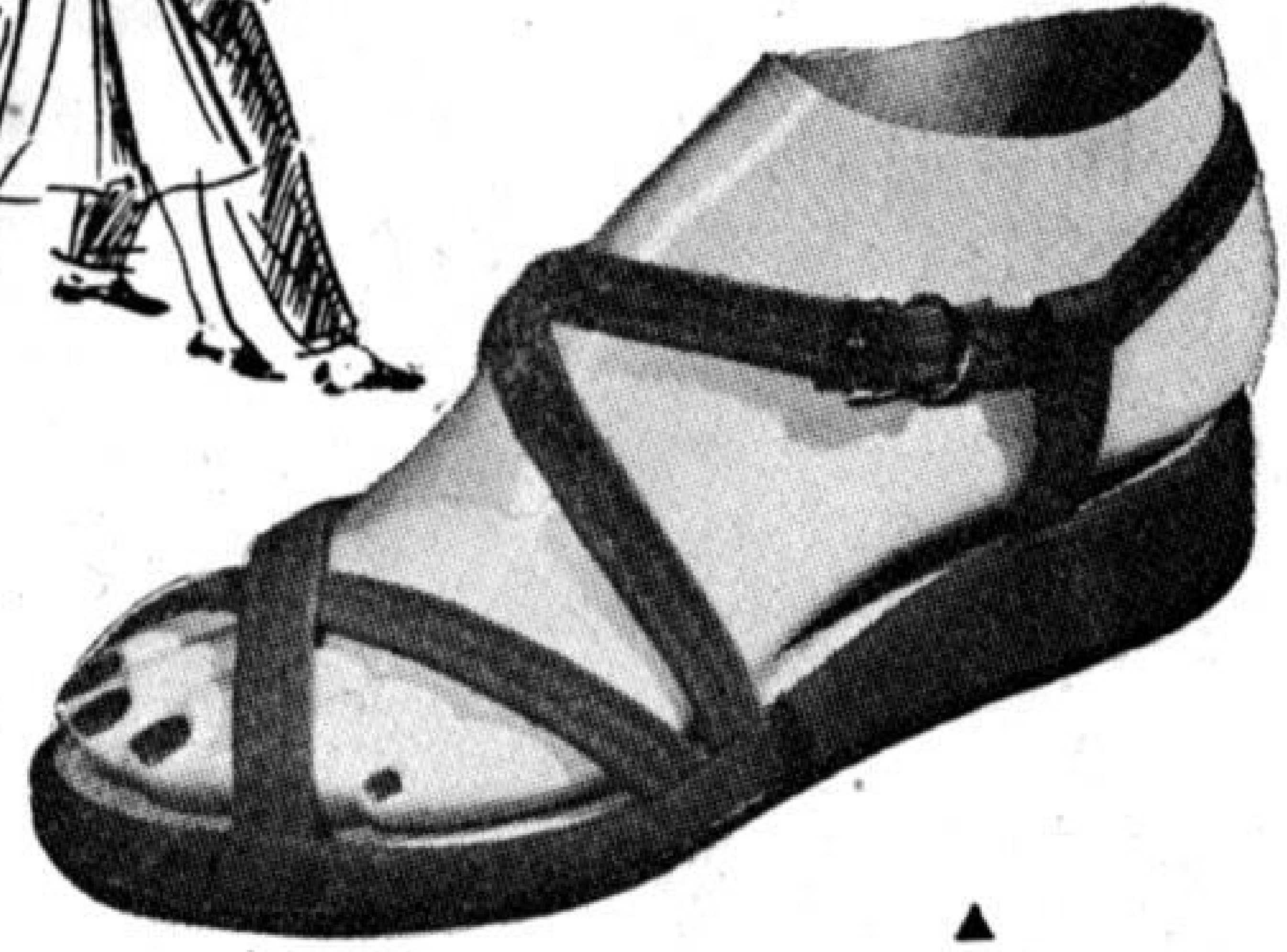

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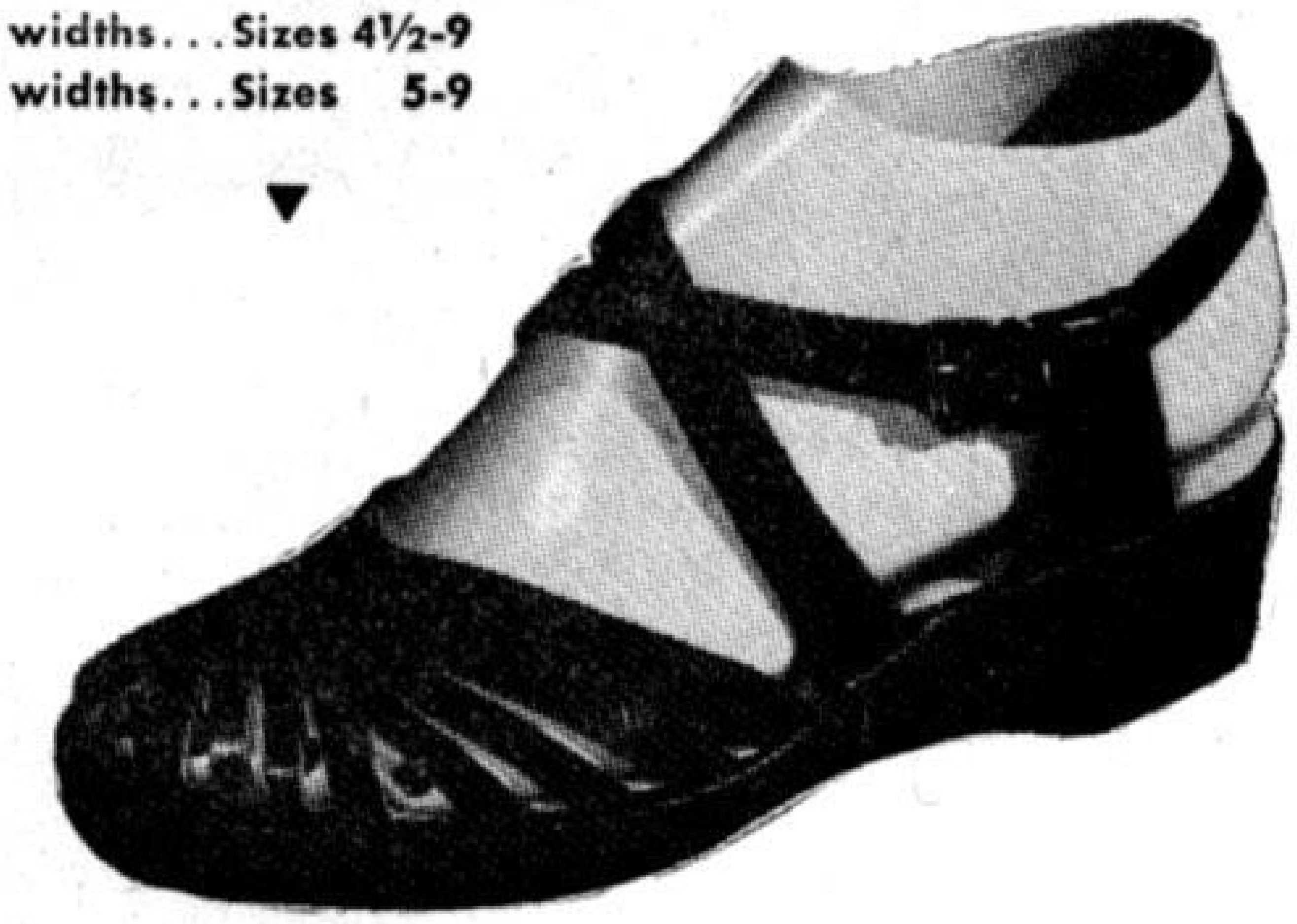

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